

CORBeyRAN

DEFALI

ASSASSIN'S —CREED®—

4 | HAWK



TITAN BOOKS

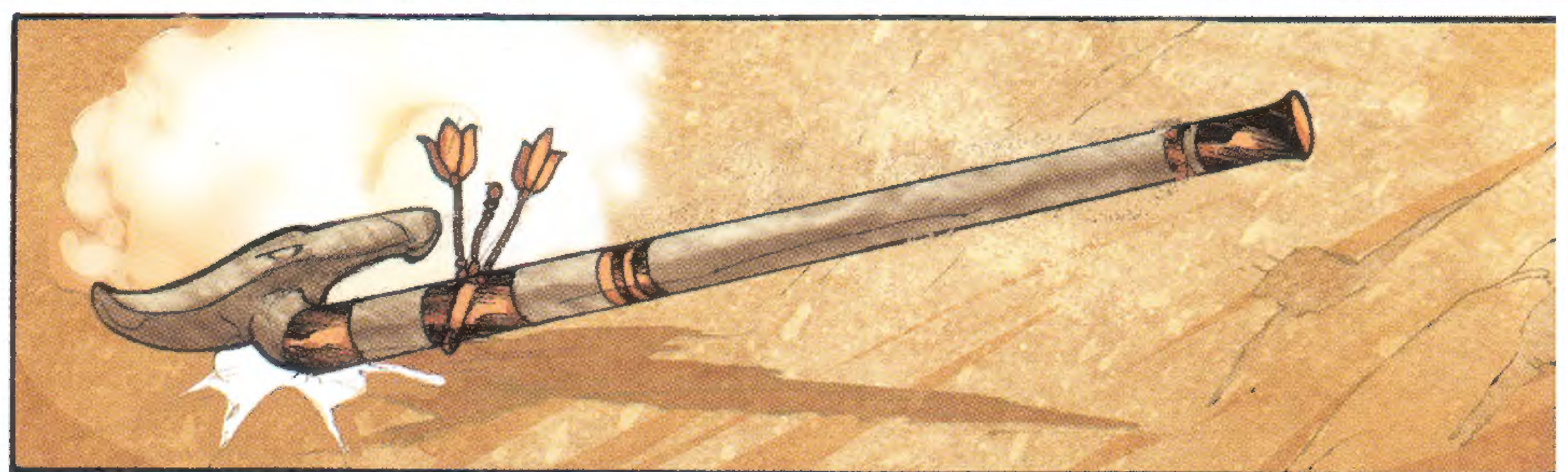
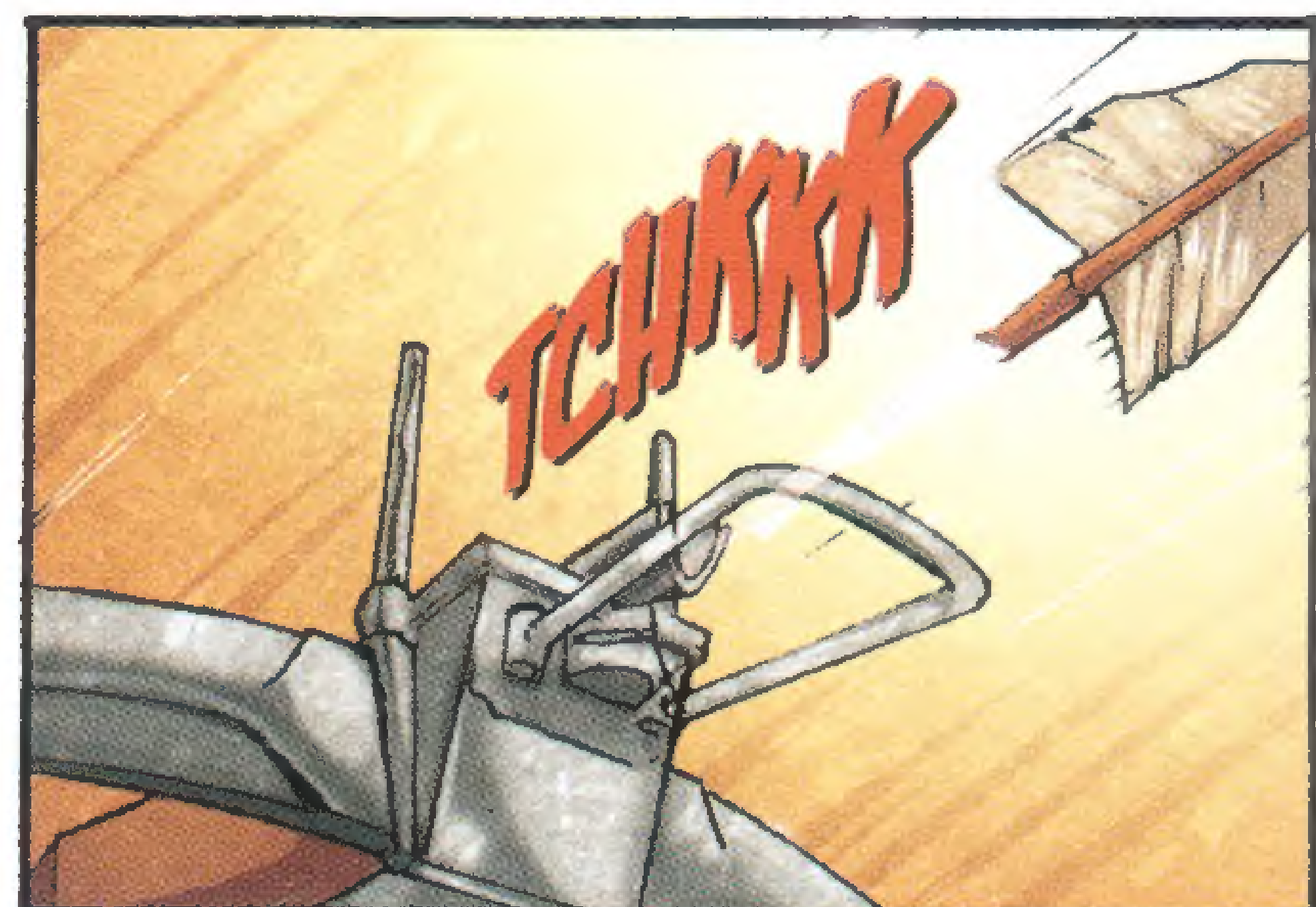
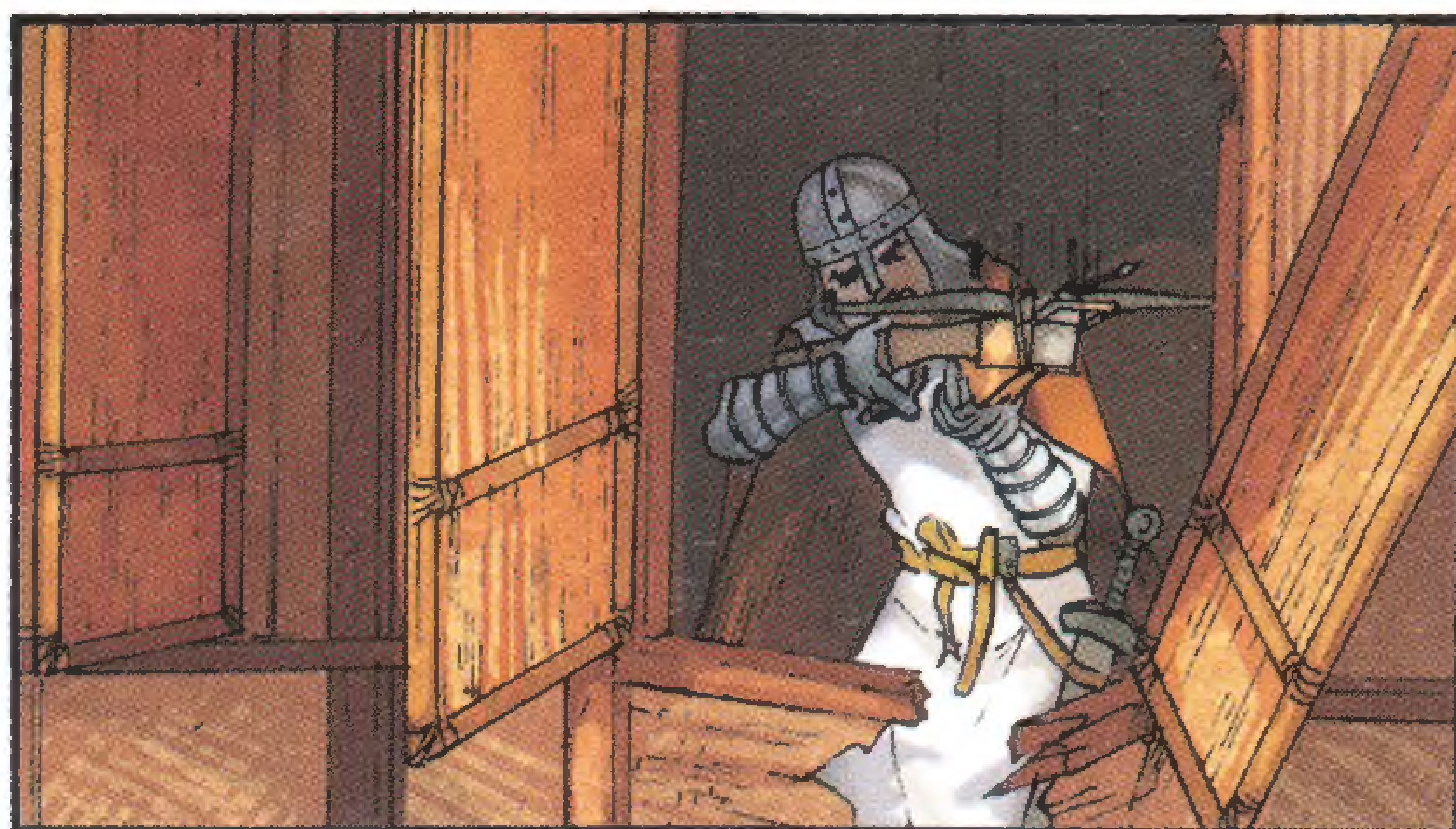
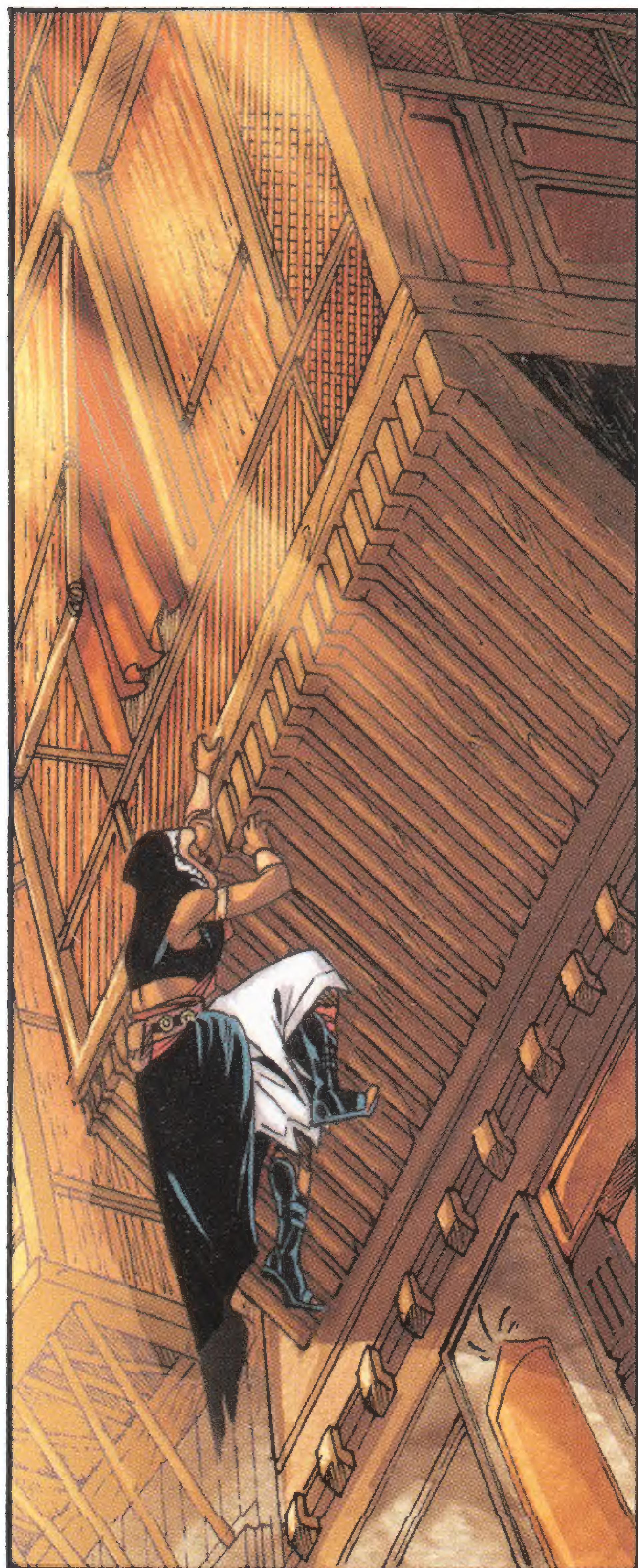
ASSASSIN'S CREED™

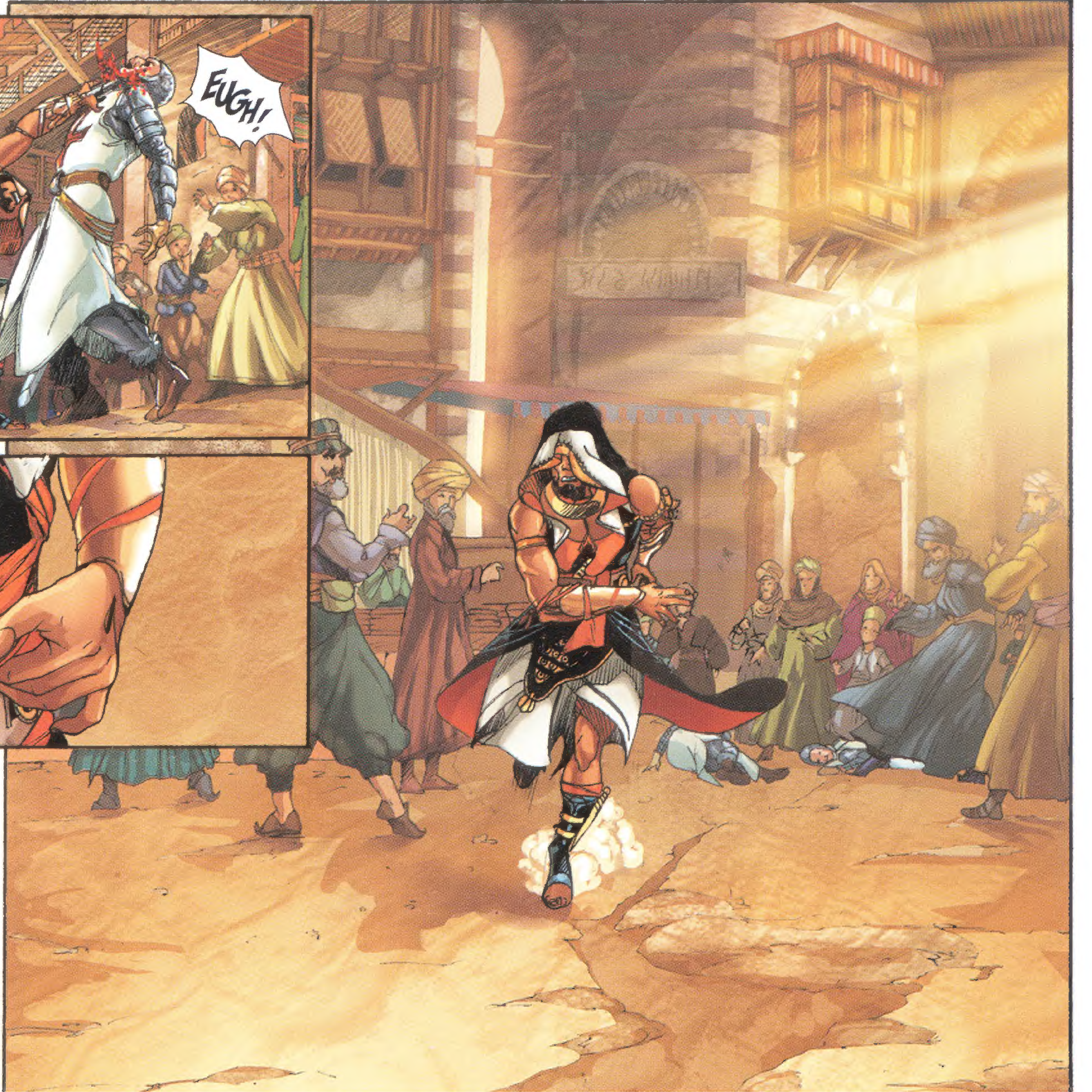
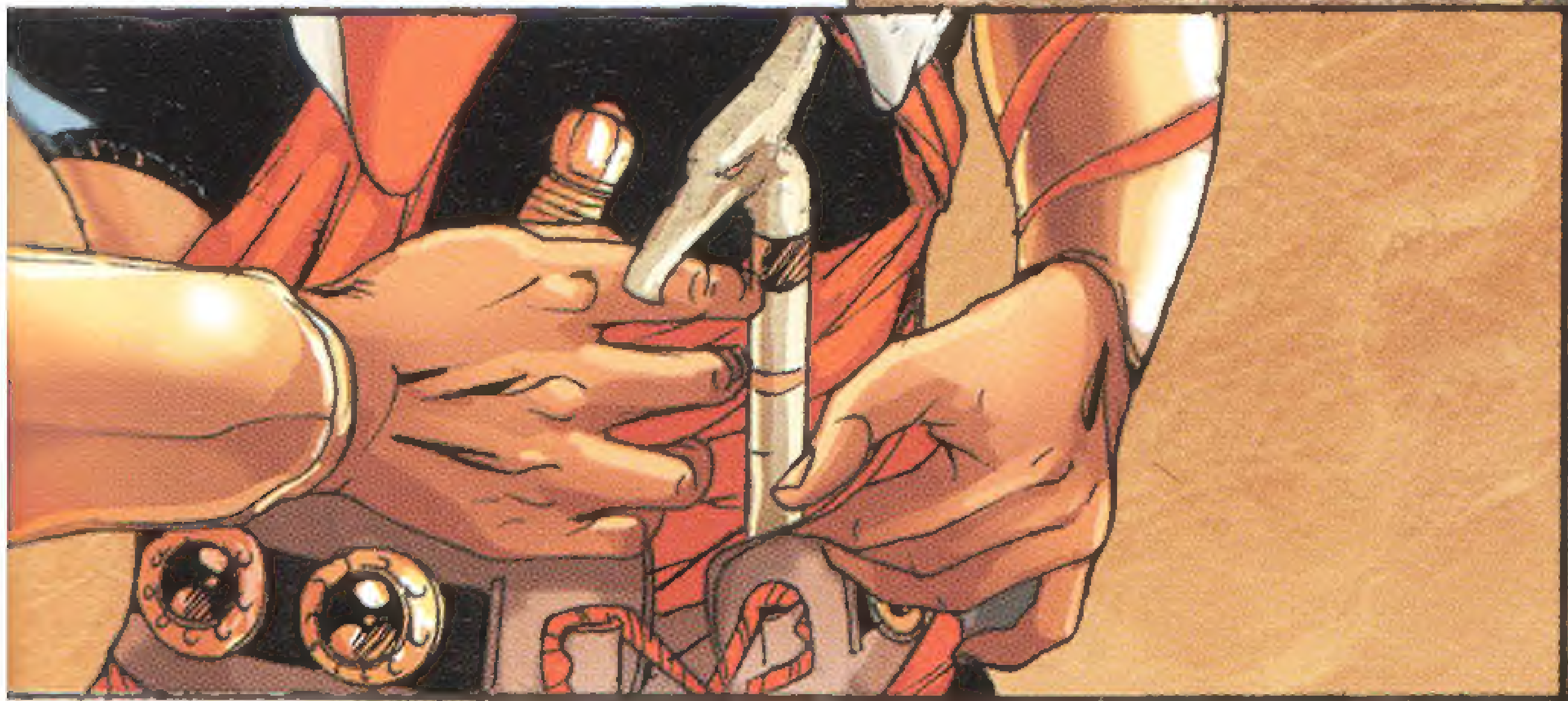
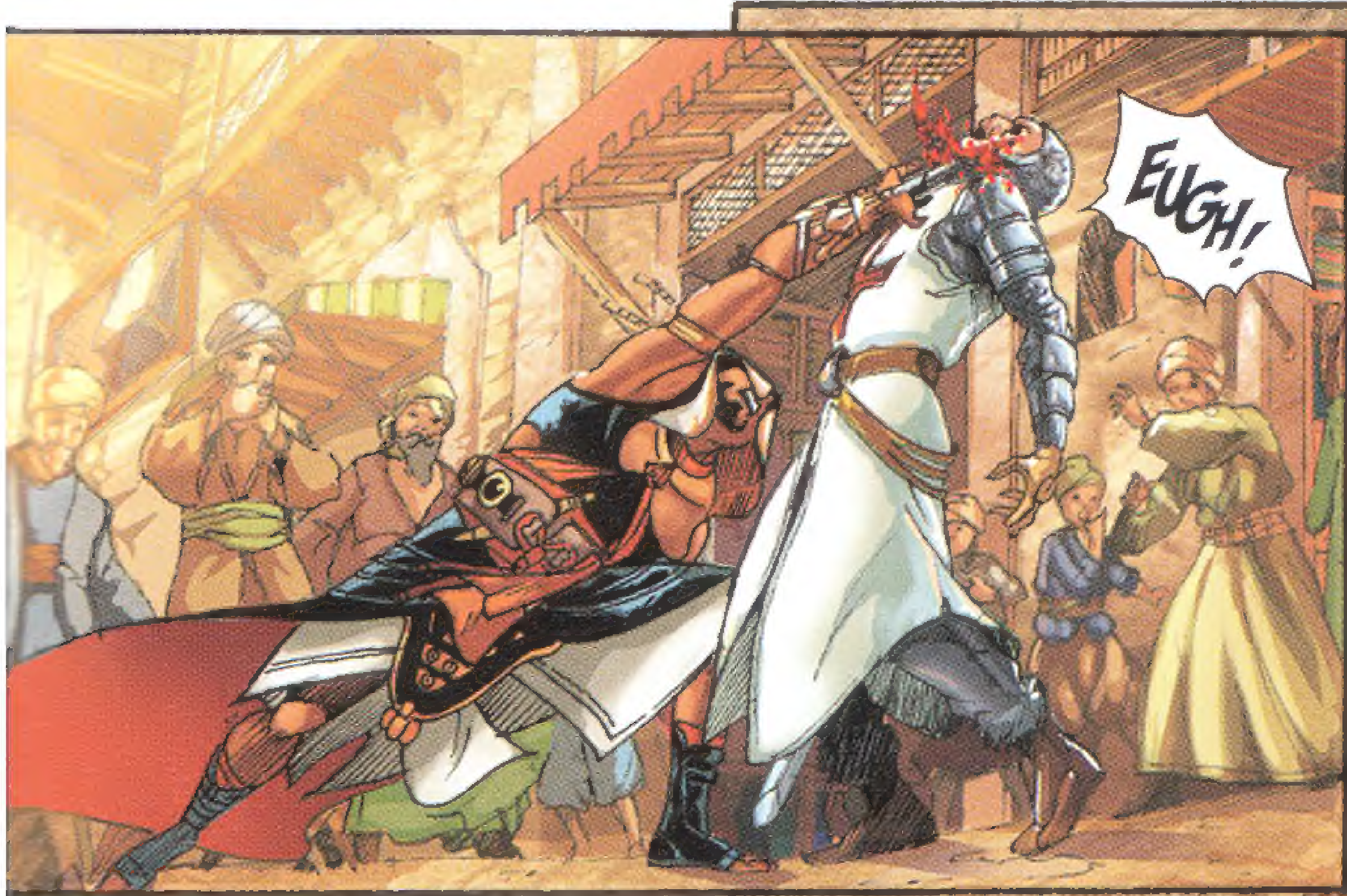
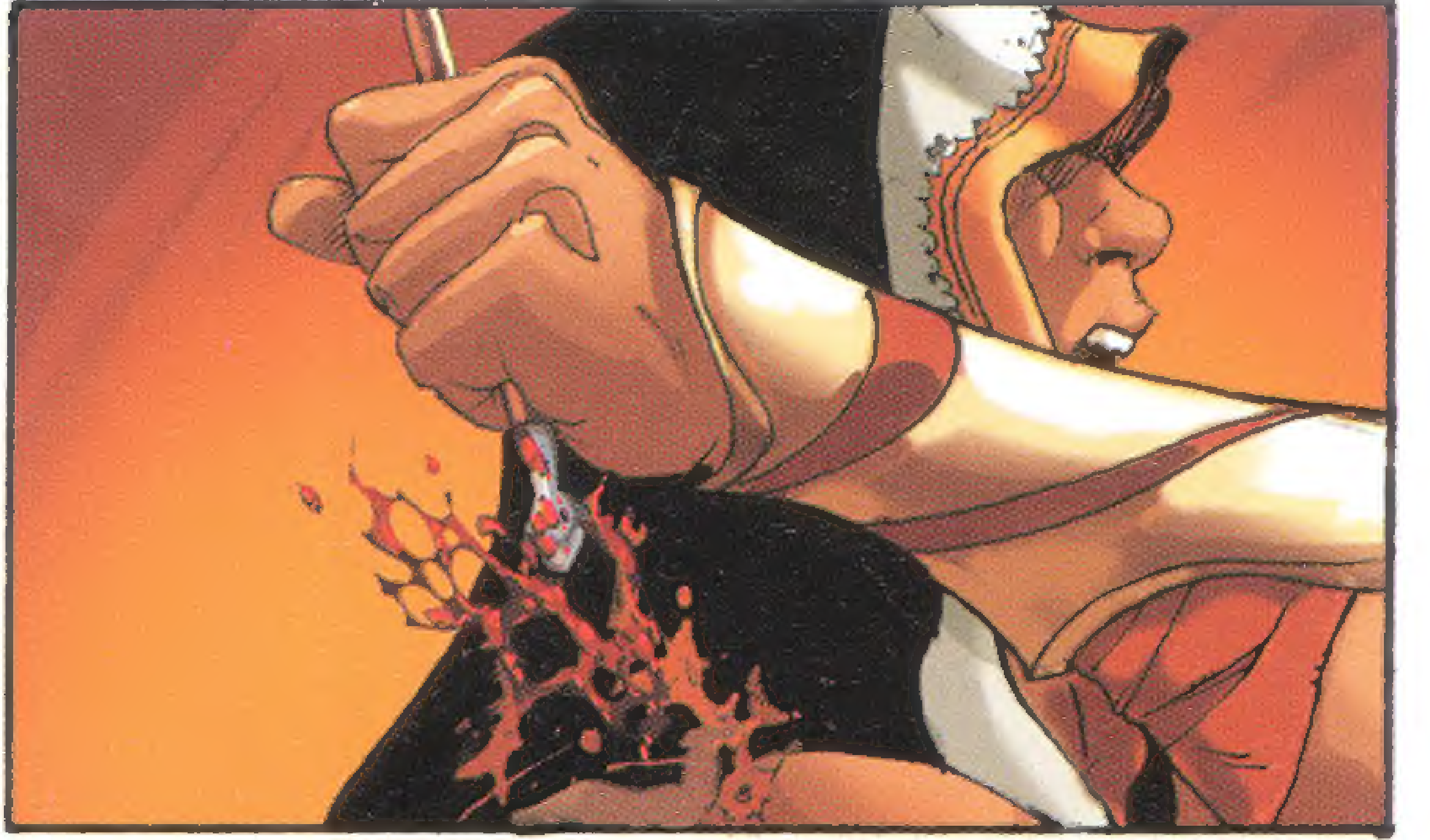


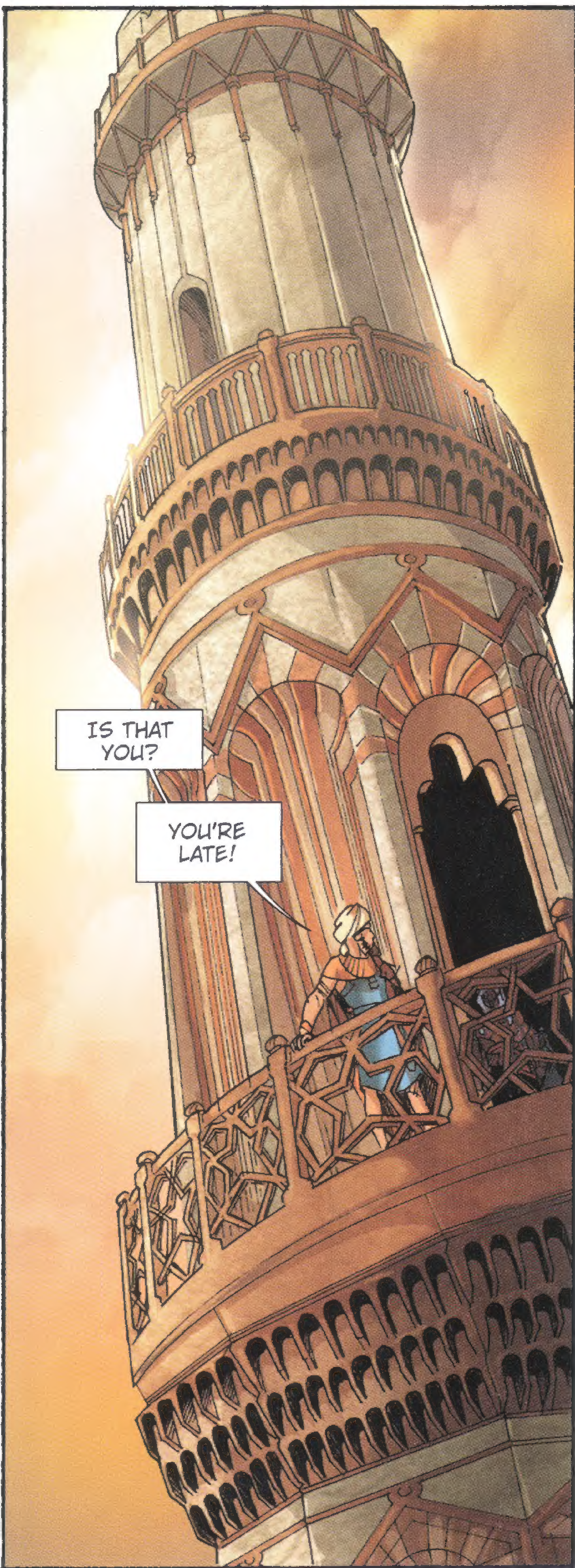
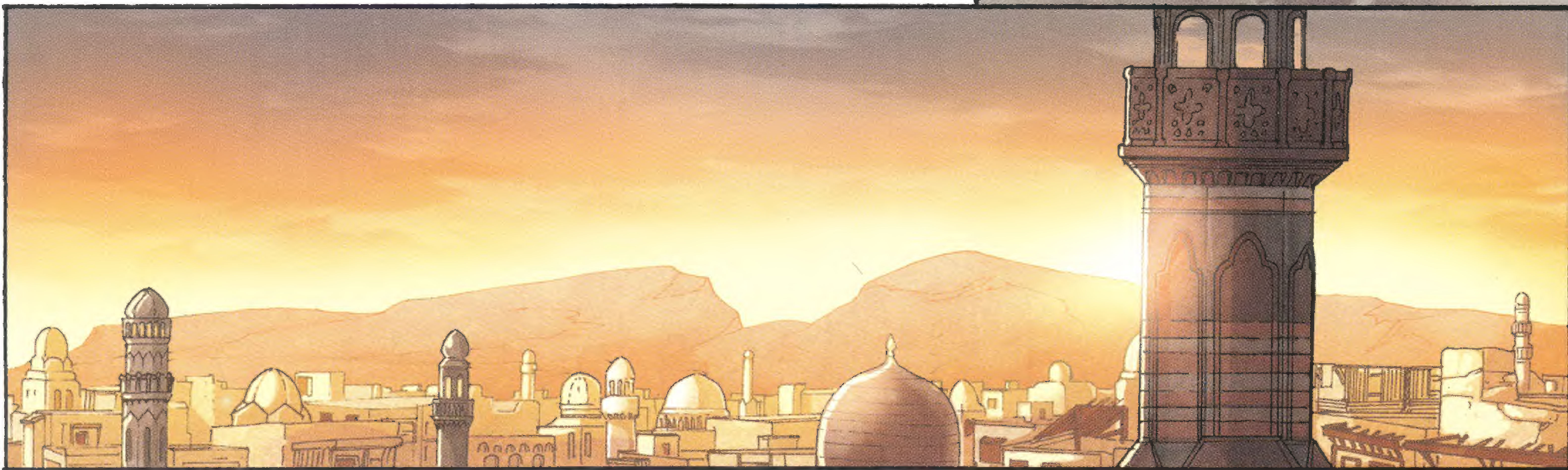
4 | HAWK

STORY : CORBEYRAN
ART : DJILLALI DEFALI
COLOR : CYRIL VINCENT









IS THAT YOU?

YOU'RE LATE!



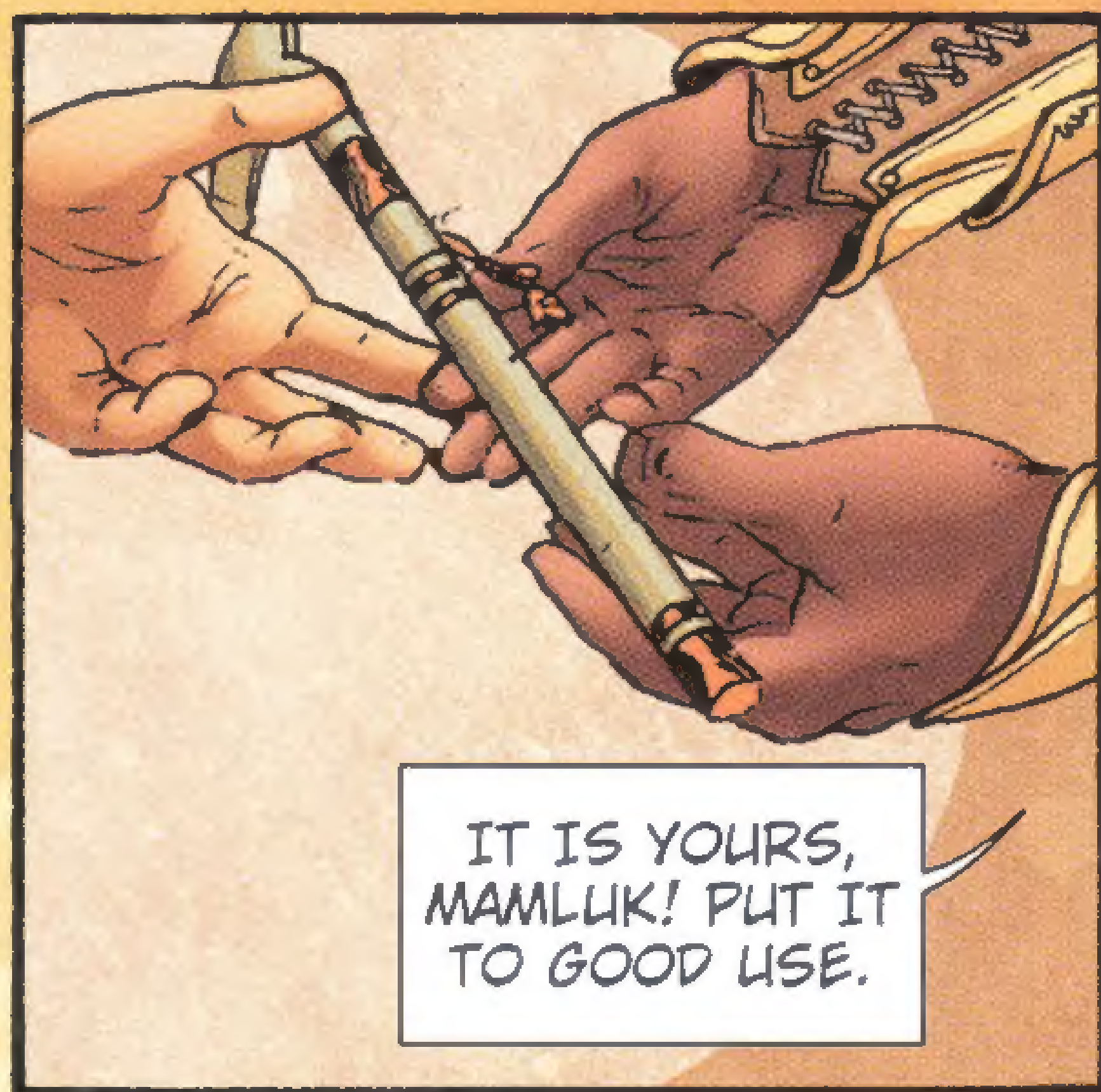
SORRY. I HAD TO OVERCOME A NUMBER OF... OBSTACLES.

YOU'RE HURT...



I WILL LIVE.

HERE IS THE SCEPTER OF ASET...



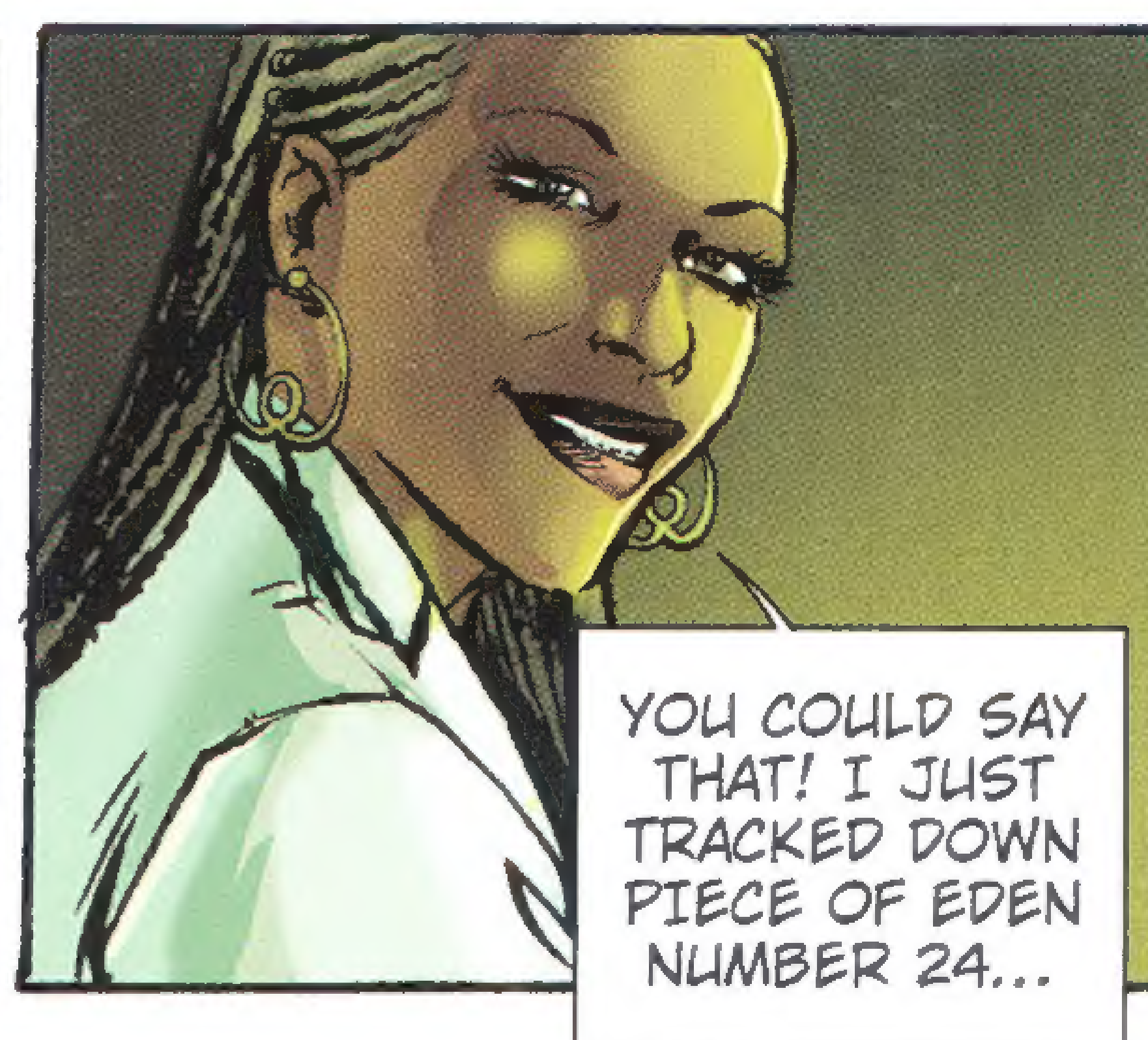
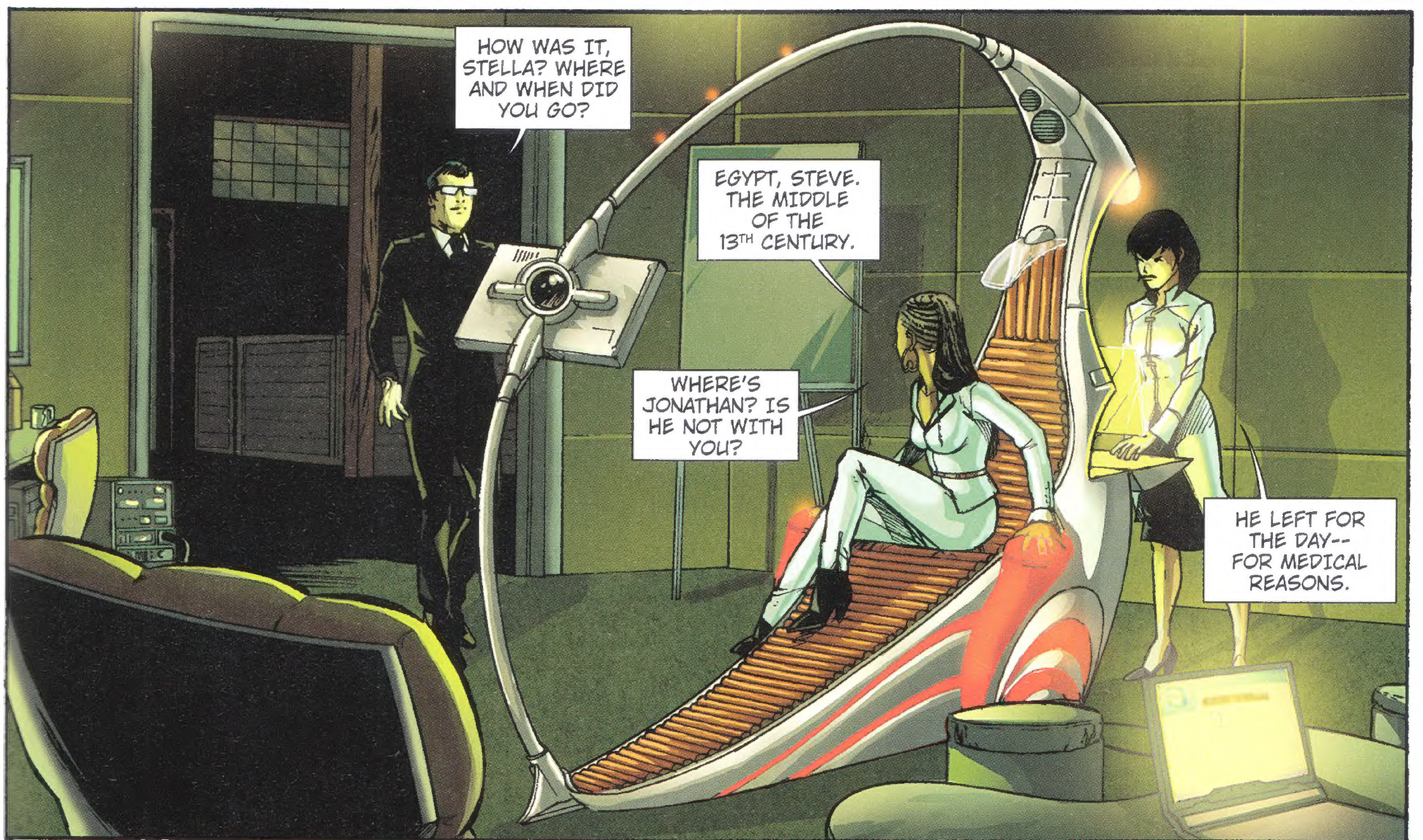
IT IS YOURS, MAMLUK! PUT IT TO GOOD USE.



BY THE POWER OF THE DIVINE... THE LAST WILL BE THE FIRST...

...AND SHALL REIGN FOR ALL ETERNITY!

CRAAA



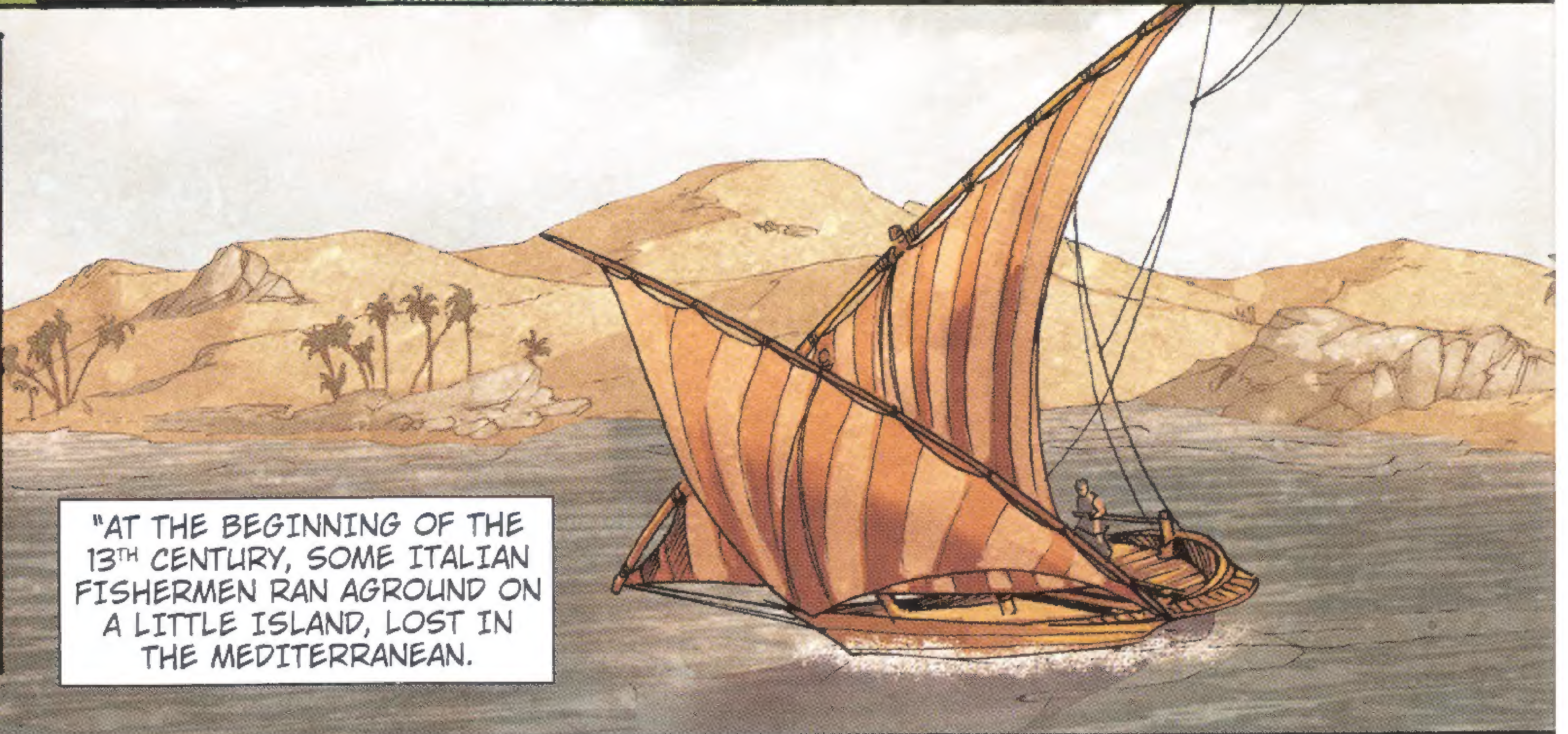
IF MY MEMORY SERVES,
THIS ISN'T THE FIRST
TIME ONE OF YOUR
ANCESTORS HAS CROSSED
PATHS WITH THIS OBJECT.

YOU'RE RIGHT. WE'VE
MANAGED TO TRACE
BITS AND PIECES OF
ITS HISTORY BEFORE.

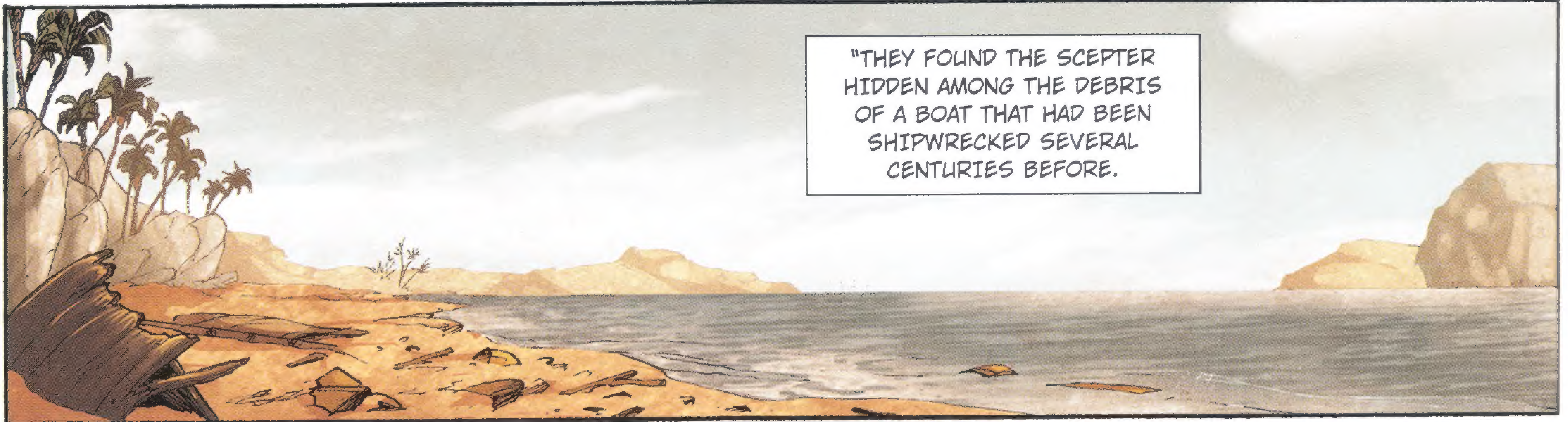
"ACCORDING TO OUR
RECORDS, IT SEEMS
THAT THE SCEPTER
ORIGINALLY BELONGED
TO THE GODDESS
ISIS--THE GREEK
NAME FOR ASET. SHE
WAS ONE OF THE MOST
INFLUENTIAL FIGURES
FROM THE 'FIRST
CIVILIZATION'.



"AT THE BEGINNING OF THE
13TH CENTURY, SOME ITALIAN
FISHERMEN RAN AGROUND ON
A LITTLE ISLAND, LOST IN
THE MEDITERRANEAN.



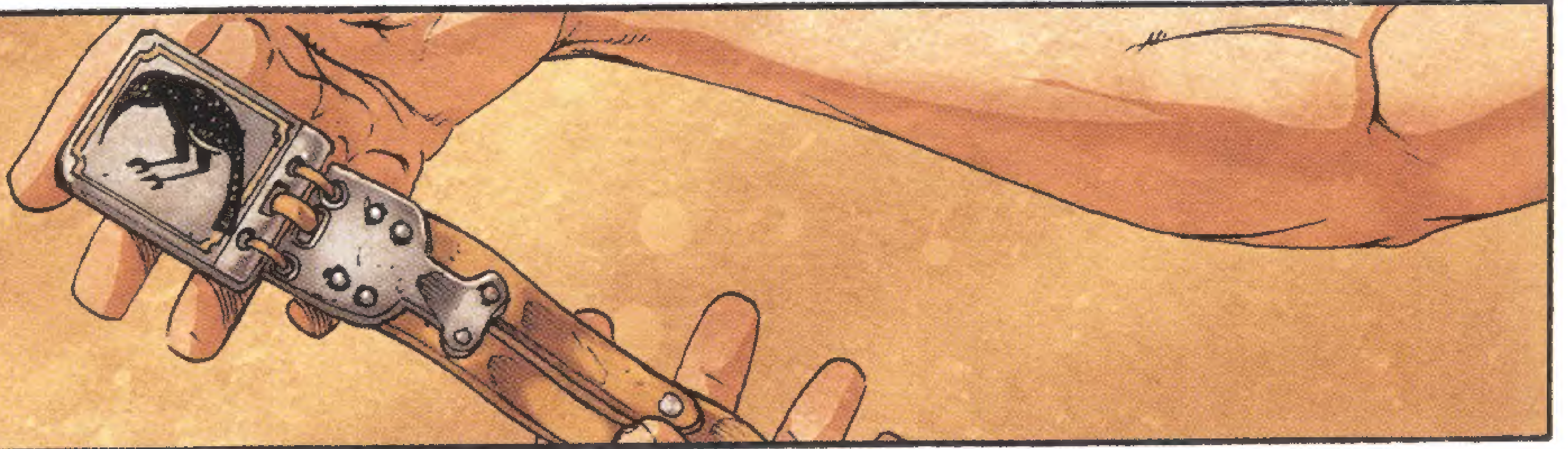
"THEY FOUND THE SCEPTER
HIDDEN AMONG THE DEBRIS
OF A BOAT THAT HAD BEEN
SHIPWRECKED SEVERAL
CENTURIES BEFORE.

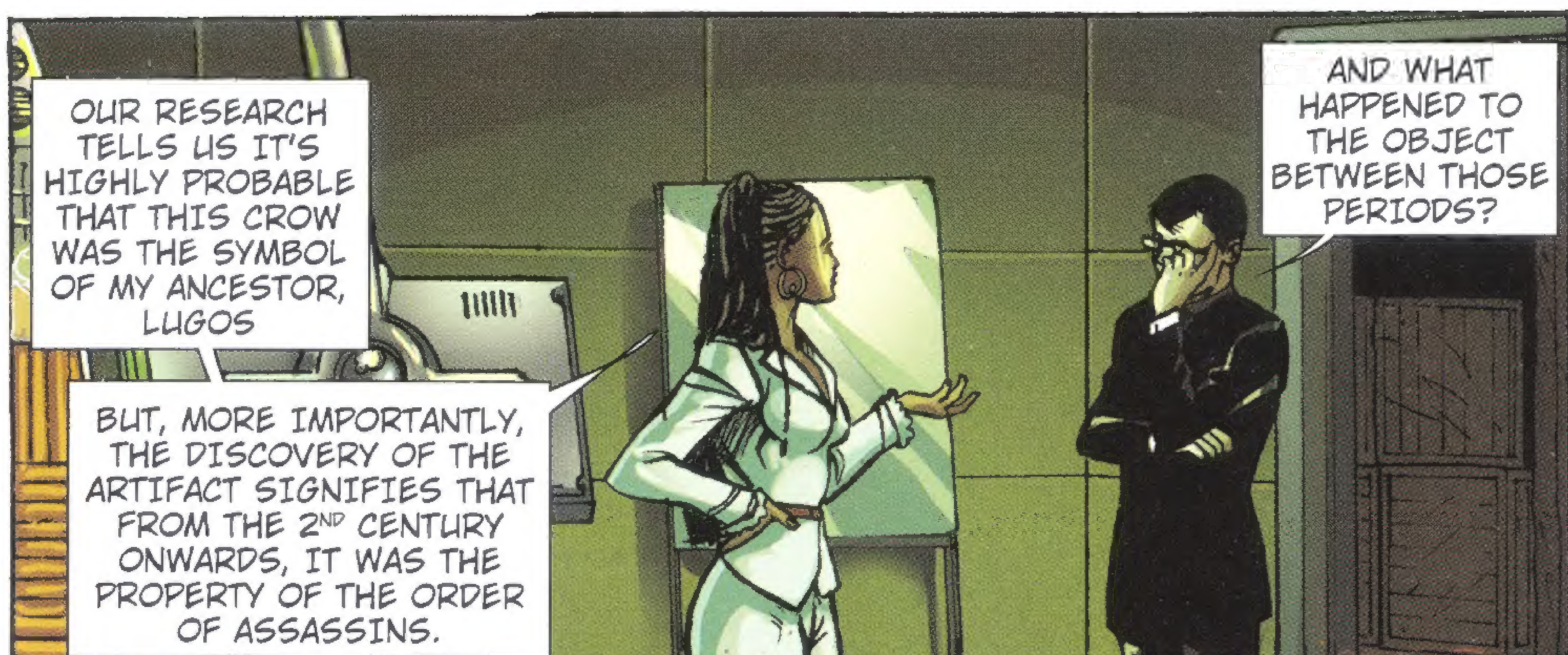


"THEY ALSO FOUND A
BRONZE BELT BUCKLE
AMONGST THE WRECKAGE.



"ENGRAVED IN
THE METAL OF THE
BUCKLE WAS THE
SHAPE OF A CROW."

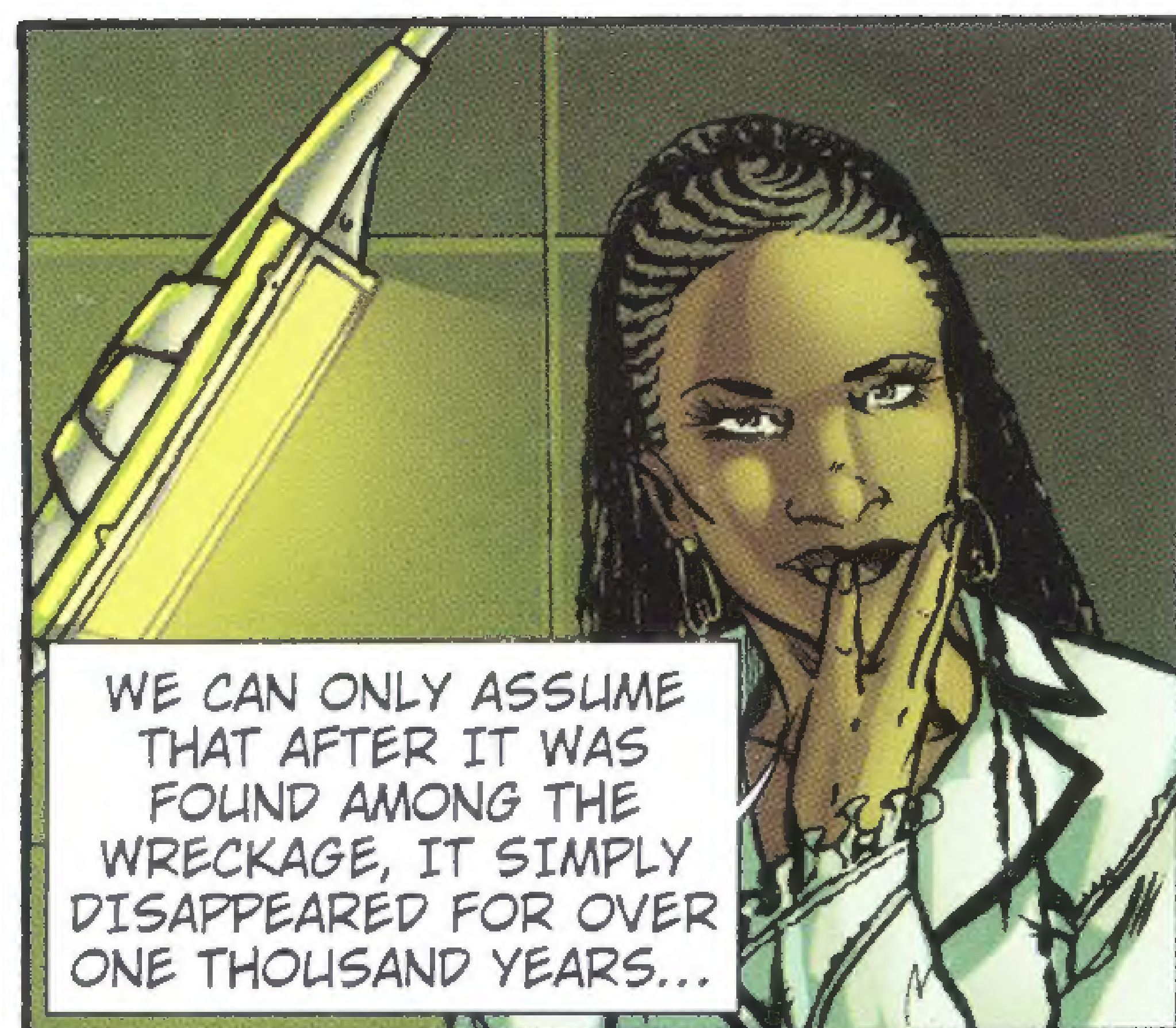




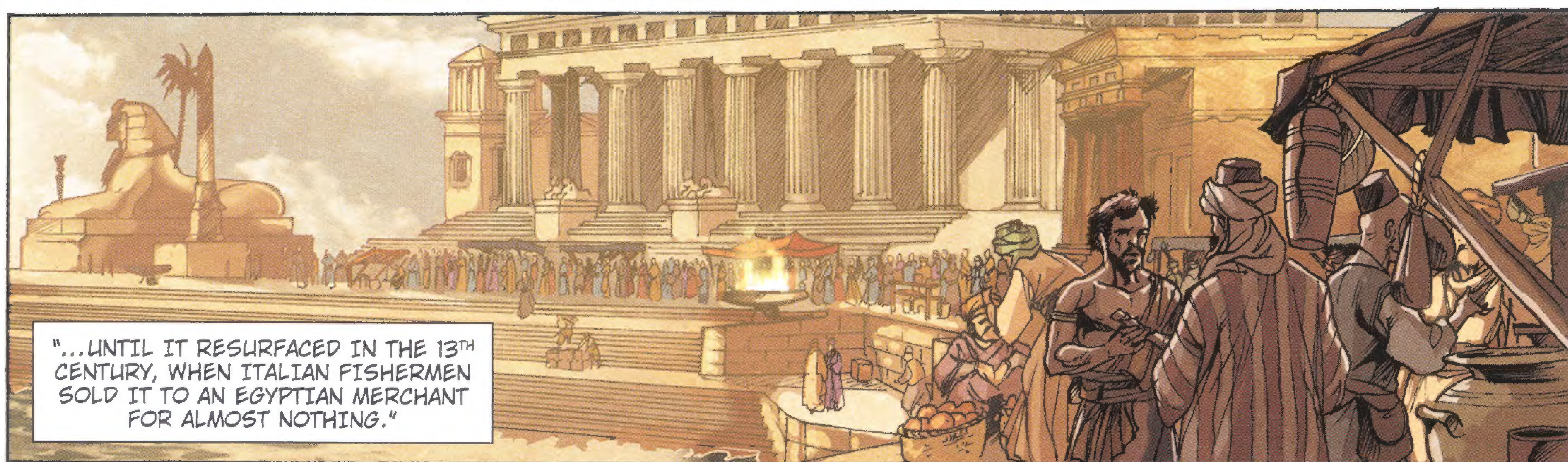
OUR RESEARCH TELLS US IT'S HIGHLY PROBABLE THAT THIS CROW WAS THE SYMBOL OF MY ANCESTOR, LUGOS

BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, THE DISCOVERY OF THE ARTIFACT SIGNIFIES THAT FROM THE 2ND CENTURY ONWARDS, IT WAS THE PROPERTY OF THE ORDER OF ASSASSINS.

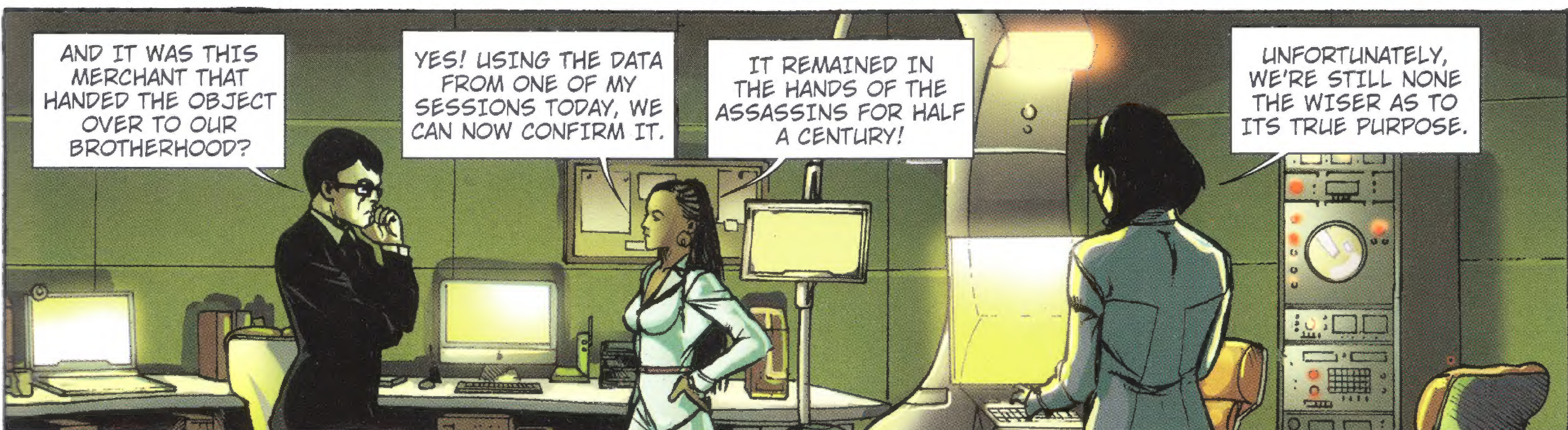
AND WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OBJECT BETWEEN THOSE PERIODS?



WE CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT AFTER IT WAS FOUND AMONG THE WRECKAGE, IT SIMPLY DISAPPEARED FOR OVER ONE THOUSAND YEARS...



"...UNTIL IT RESURFACED IN THE 13TH CENTURY, WHEN ITALIAN FISHERMEN SOLD IT TO AN EGYPTIAN MERCHANT FOR ALMOST NOTHING."



AND IT WAS THIS MERCHANT THAT HANDED THE OBJECT OVER TO OUR BROTHERHOOD?

YES! USING THE DATA FROM ONE OF MY SESSIONS TODAY, WE CAN NOW CONFIRM IT.

IT REMAINED IN THE HANDS OF THE ASSASSINS FOR HALF A CENTURY!

UNFORTUNATELY, WE'RE STILL NONE THE WISER AS TO ITS TRUE PURPOSE.



WE'LL REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS AND FIND OUT.



STELLA CROW. WHO'S THIS?

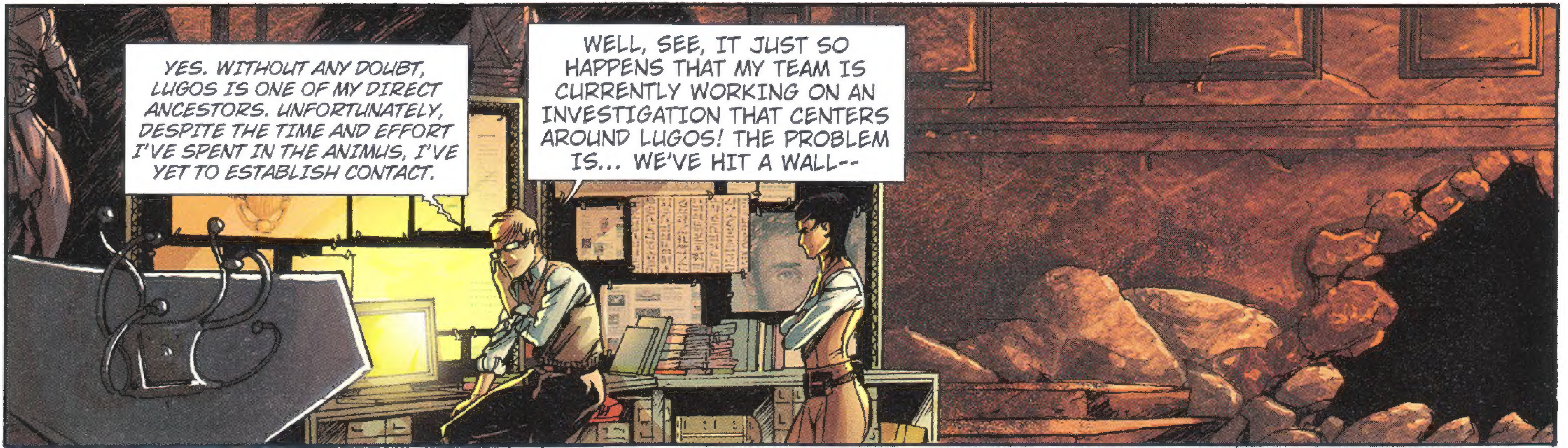
HELLO, STELLA. IT'S SHAUN...

AND WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU, SHAUN?



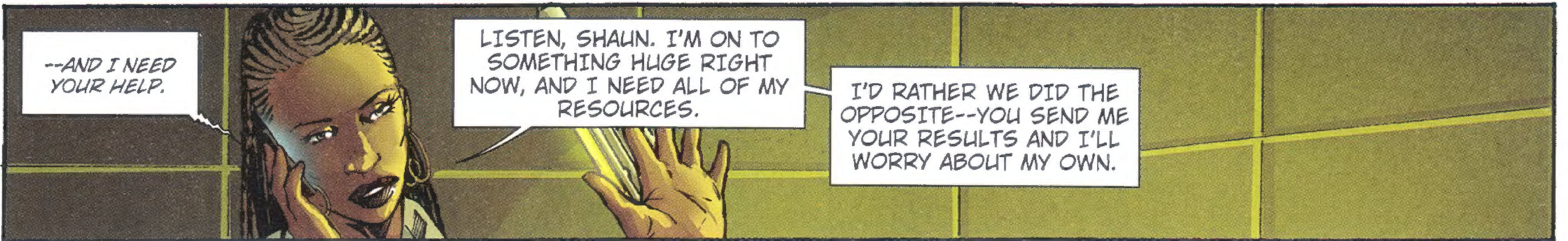
WELL... I'VE BEEN ANALYZING THE ARCHIVES ON DESMOND MILES' ANCESTORS, AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF INSTANCES OF THE NAME 'LUGOS'.

I SUDDENLY REMEMBERED THAT WE BOTH CAME ACROSS THIS NAME SOME TIME AGO--



YES. WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, LUGOS IS ONE OF MY DIRECT ANCESTORS. UNFORTUNATELY, DESPITE THE TIME AND EFFORT I'VE SPENT IN THE ANIMUS, I'VE YET TO ESTABLISH CONTACT.

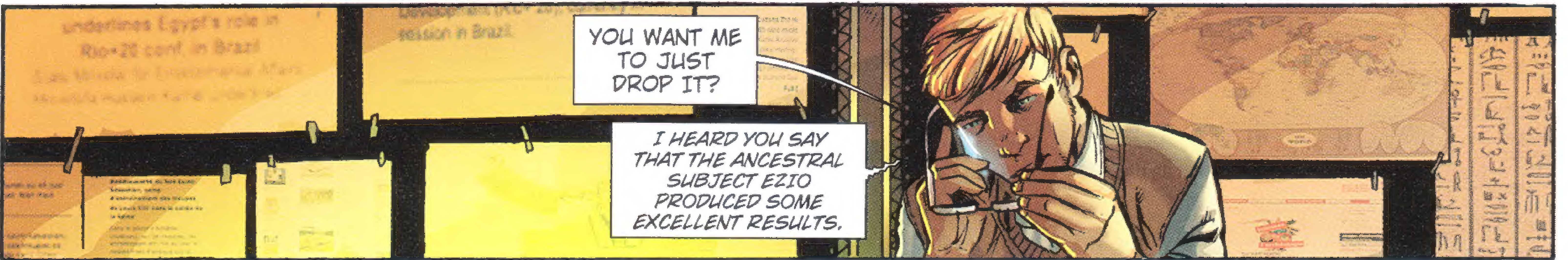
WELL, SEE, IT JUST SO HAPPENS THAT MY TEAM IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON AN INVESTIGATION THAT CENTERS AROUND LUGOS! THE PROBLEM IS... WE'VE HIT A WALL--



--AND I NEED YOUR HELP.

LISTEN, SHAUN. I'M ON TO SOMETHING HUGE RIGHT NOW, AND I NEED ALL OF MY RESOURCES.

I'D RATHER WE DID THE OPPOSITE--YOU SEND ME YOUR RESULTS AND I'LL WORRY ABOUT MY OWN.



YOU WANT ME TO JUST DROP IT?

I HEARD YOU SAY THAT THE ANCESTRAL SUBJECT EZIO PRODUCED SOME EXCELLENT RESULTS.



THAT'S TRUE. BUT--

BUT WHAT? IT'S NOT EVERYDAY WE GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO FIND AN APPLE OF EDEN! WHY DON'T YOU FOCUS YOUR EFFORTS ON EZIO, AND LET ME HANDLE LUGOS?



BESIDES, IN LIGHT OF ALL THIS INFORMATION, I'M GOING TO CONTACT THE OTHER CELLS AND SUGGEST WE REVIEW THE ENTIRE OPERATION. I'LL KEEP YOU INFORMED.



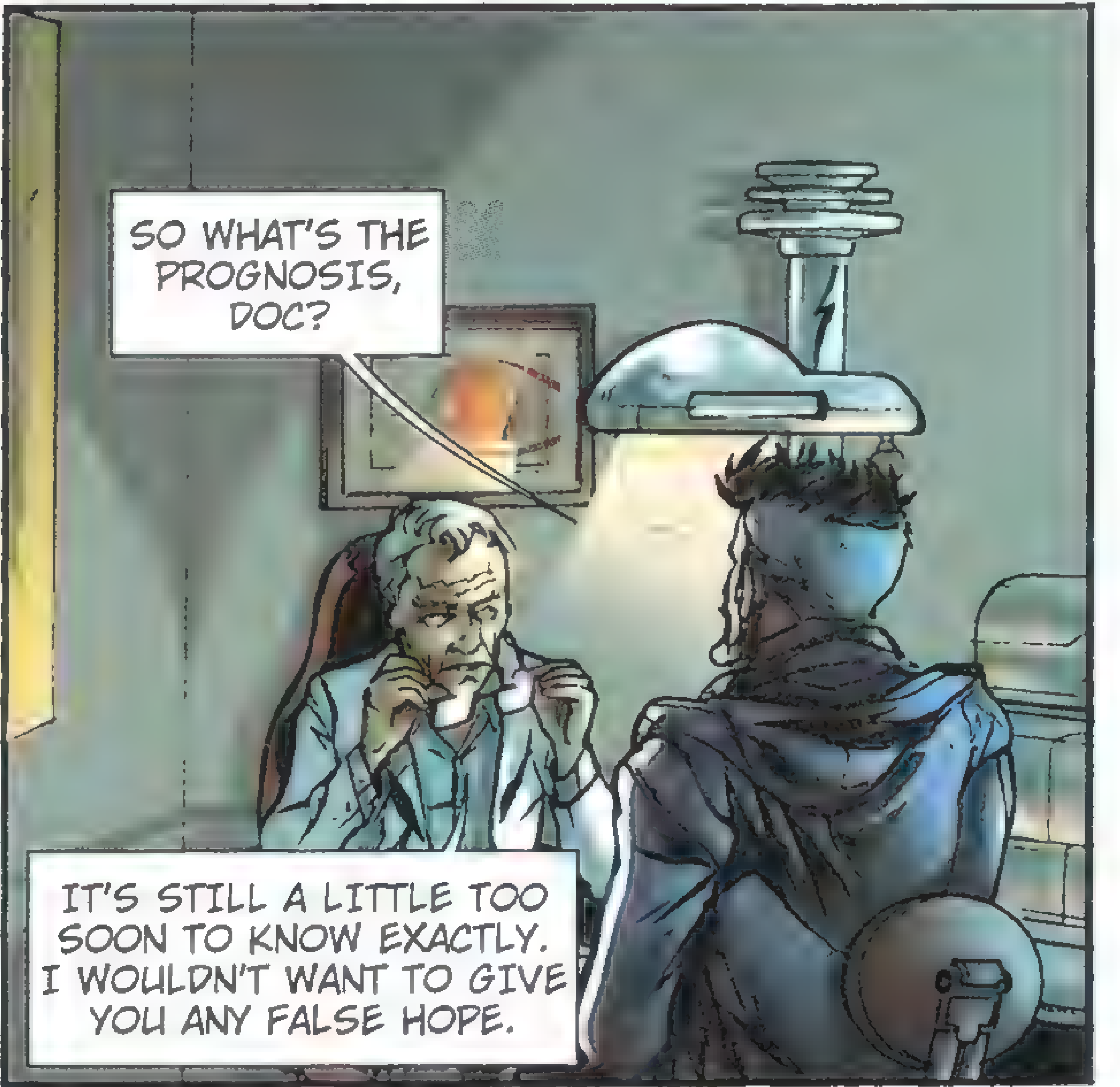
OF ALL THE NERVE--

THAT BLOODY WOMAN! A MURDER OF CROWS? THEY GOT THAT RIGHT! IF I EVER GET MY HANDS ON HER--!

HAHAHA!

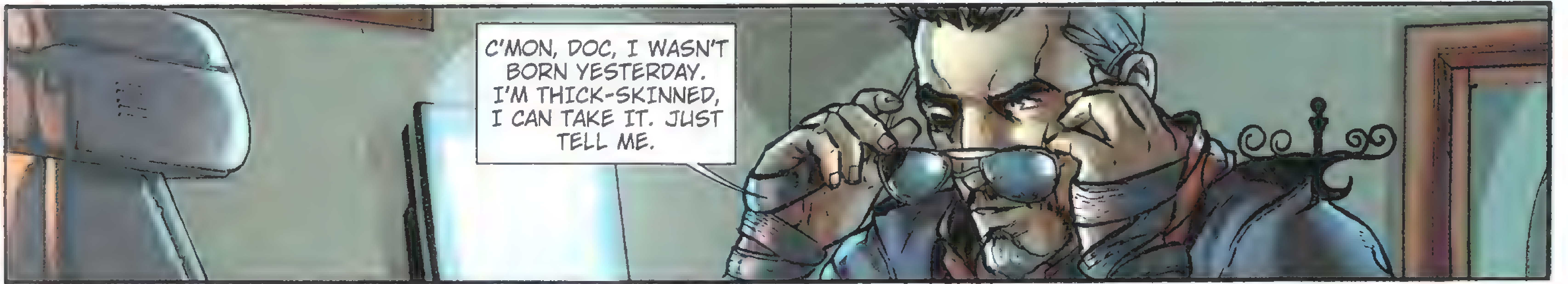


WE'RE DONE WITH YOUR EXAMINATIONS FOR TODAY, MR. HAWK.



SO WHAT'S THE PROGNOSIS, DOC?

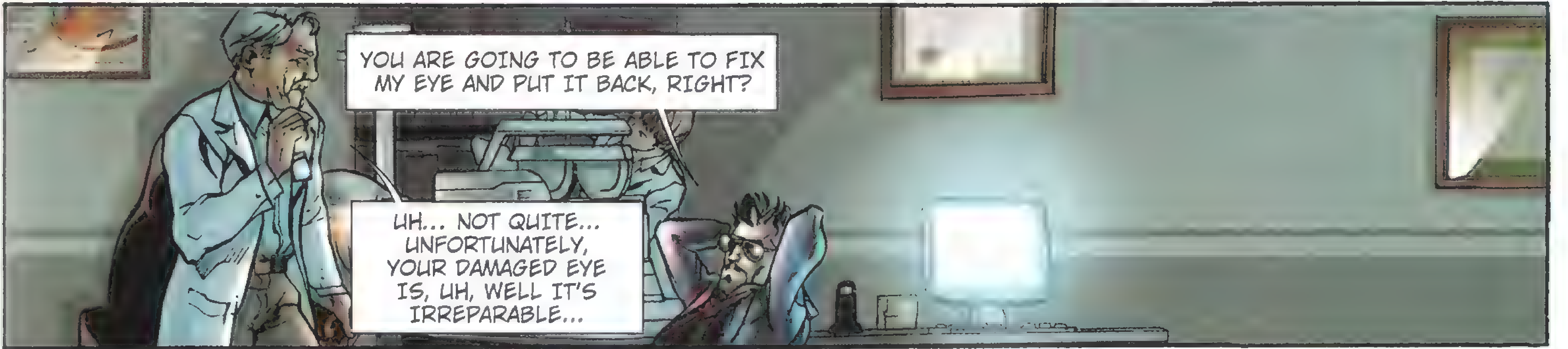
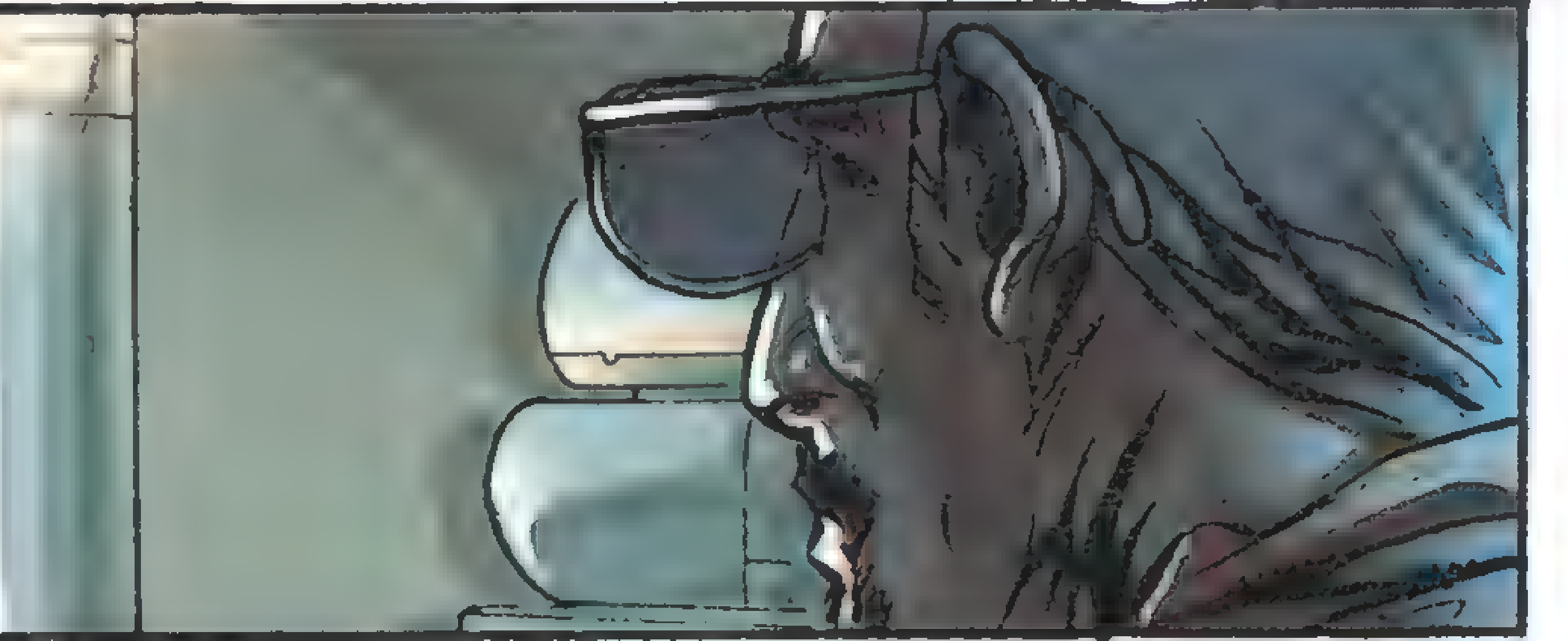
IT'S STILL A LITTLE TOO SOON TO KNOW EXACTLY. I WOULDN'T WANT TO GIVE YOU ANY FALSE HOPE.



C'MON, DOC, I WASN'T BORN YESTERDAY. I'M THICK-SKINNED, I CAN TAKE IT. JUST TELL ME.

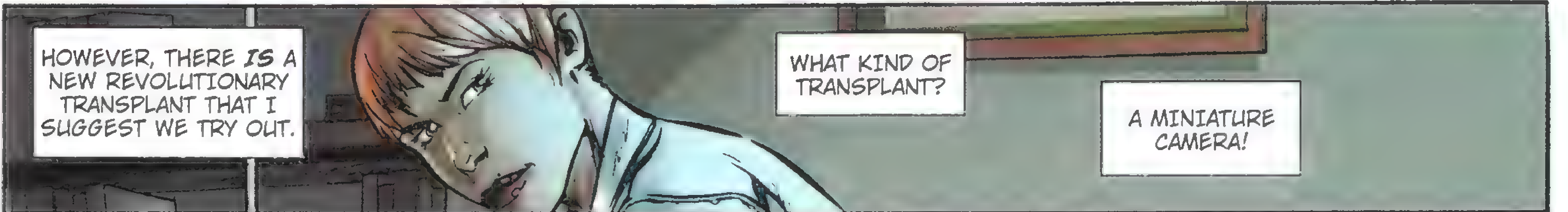


WELL... ONCE WE'RE ABLE TO CONFIRM ALL OUR RESULTS FROM THE TESTS WE'VE DONE TODAY, WE CAN CERTAINLY ATTEMPT AN OPERATION A FEW WEEKS FROM NOW...



YOU ARE GOING TO BE ABLE TO FIX MY EYE AND PUT IT BACK, RIGHT?

UH... NOT QUITE... UNFORTUNATELY, YOUR DAMAGED EYE IS, UH, WELL IT'S IRREPARABLE...



HOWEVER, THERE IS A NEW REVOLUTIONARY TRANSPLANT THAT I SUGGEST WE TRY OUT.

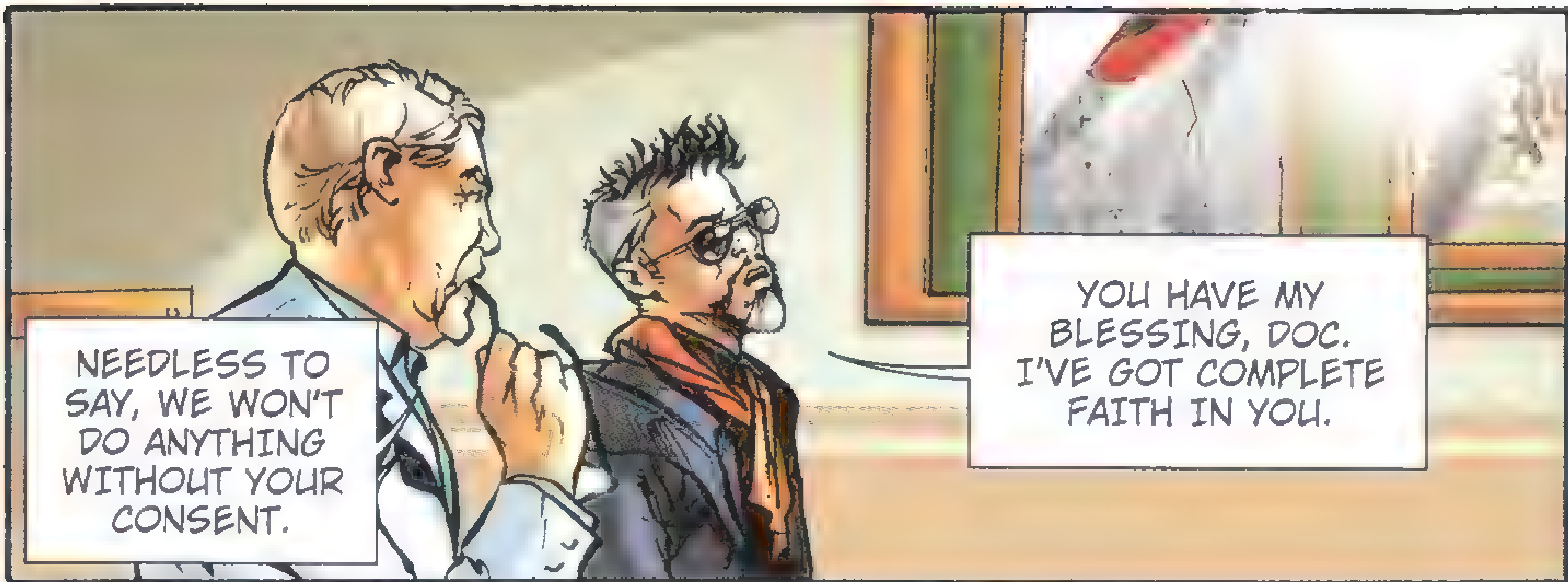
WHAT KIND OF TRANSPLANT?

A MINIATURE CAMERA!



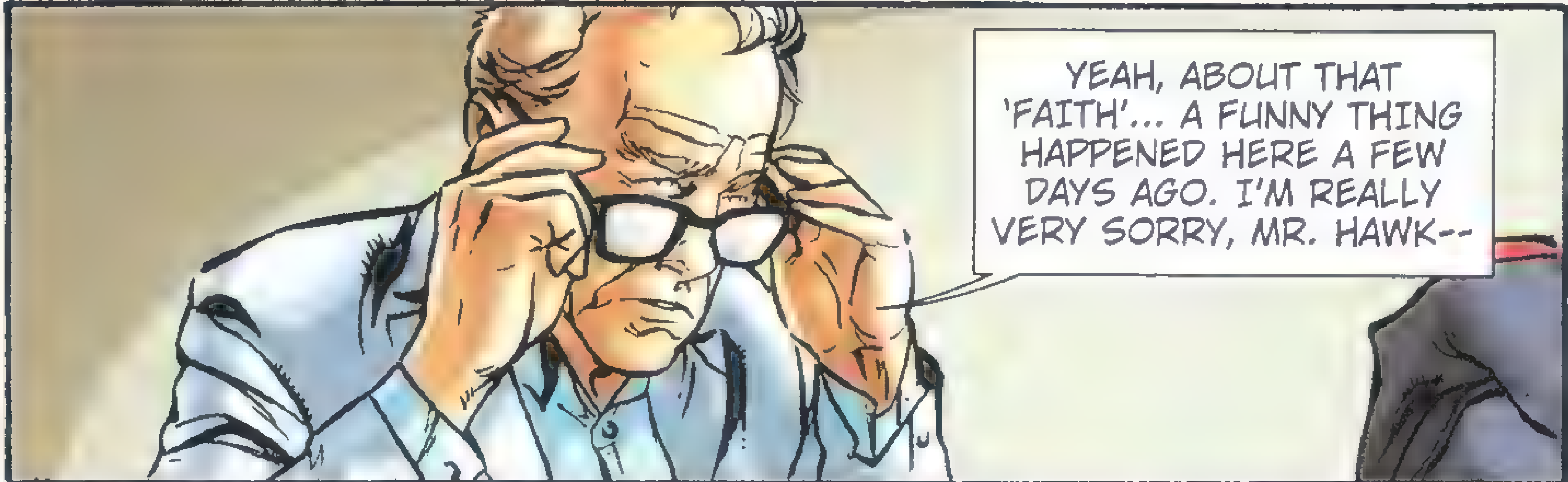
WOAH! ARE YOU SERIOUS?
I'LL LOOK LIKE A CYBORG WITH
THAT THING IN MY SKULL!

HAHAHA! I
WOULDN'T GO
THAT FAR.

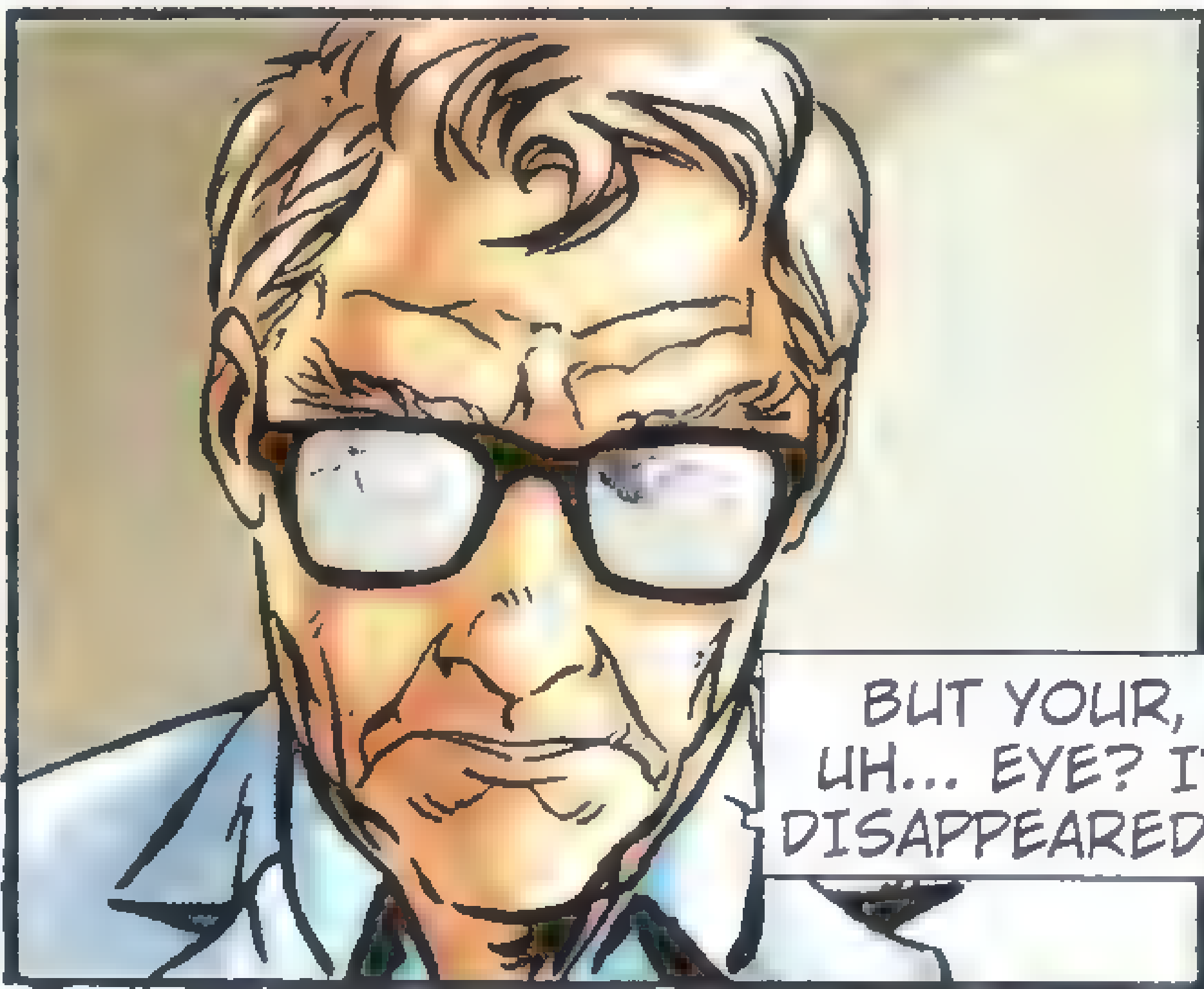


NEEDLESS TO
SAY, WE WON'T
DO ANYTHING
WITHOUT YOUR
CONSENT.

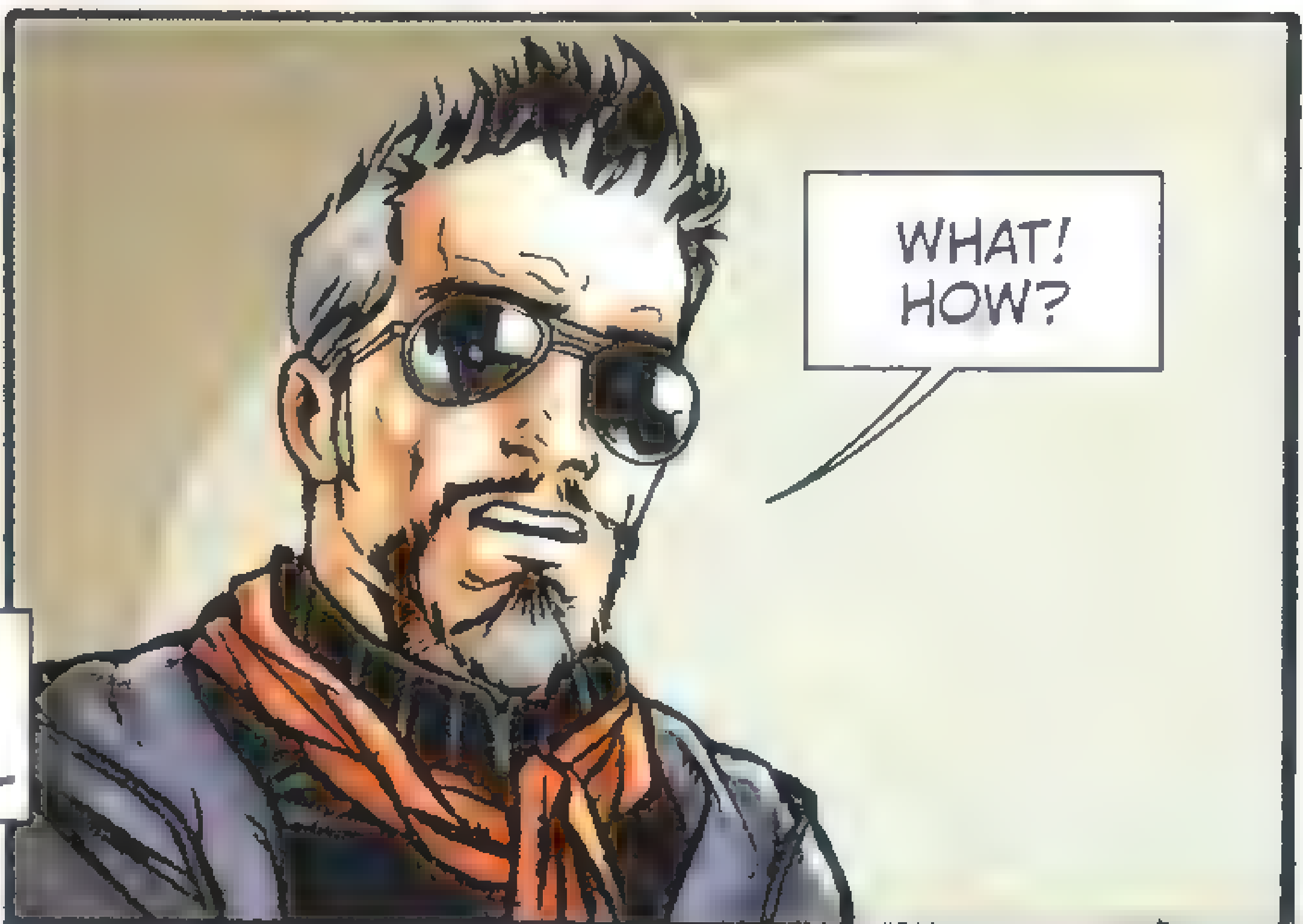
YOU HAVE MY
BLESSING, DOC.
I'VE GOT COMPLETE
FAITH IN YOU.



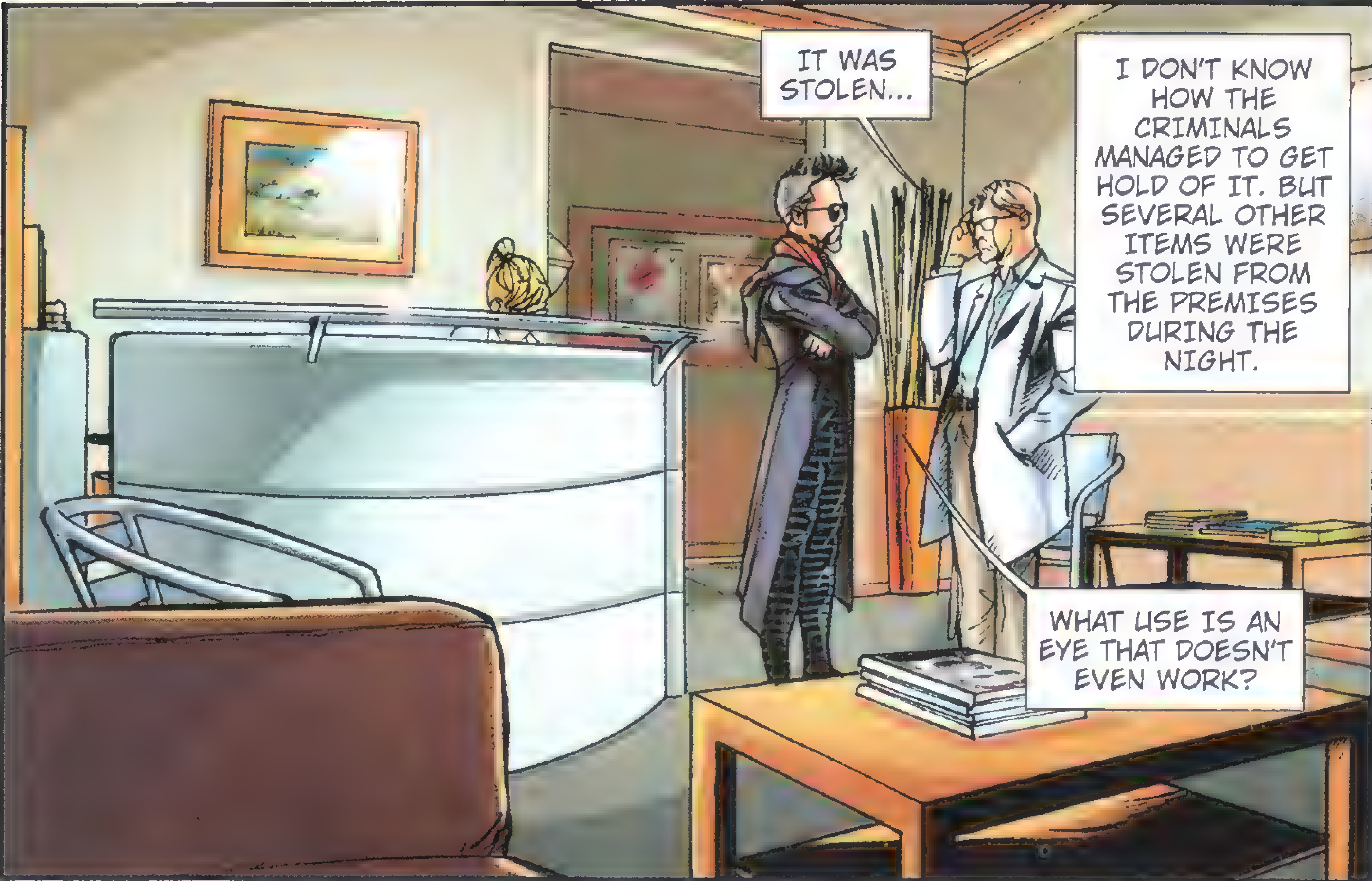
YEAH, ABOUT THAT
'FAITH'... A FUNNY THING
HAPPENED HERE A FEW
DAYS AGO. I'M REALLY
VERY SORRY, MR. HAWK--



BUT YOUR,
UH... EYE? IT
DISAPPEARED--



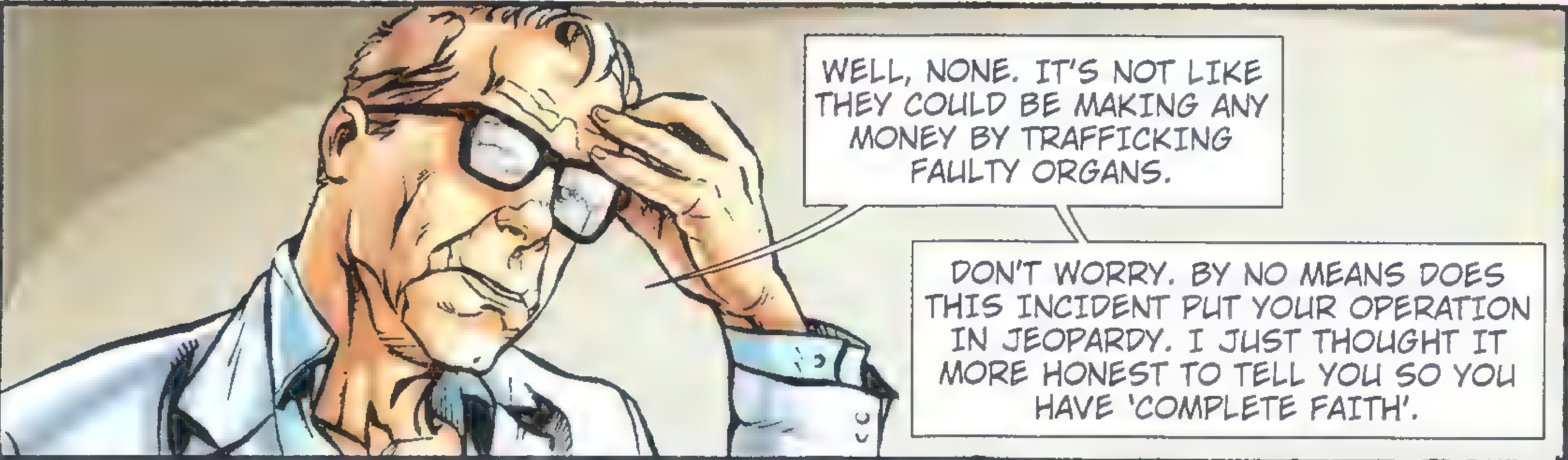
WHAT!
HOW?



IT WAS
STOLEN...

I DON'T KNOW
HOW THE
CRIMINALS
MANAGED TO GET
HOLD OF IT. BUT
SEVERAL OTHER
ITEMS WERE
STOLEN FROM
THE PREMISES
DURING THE
NIGHT.

WHAT USE IS AN
EYE THAT DOESN'T
EVEN WORK?



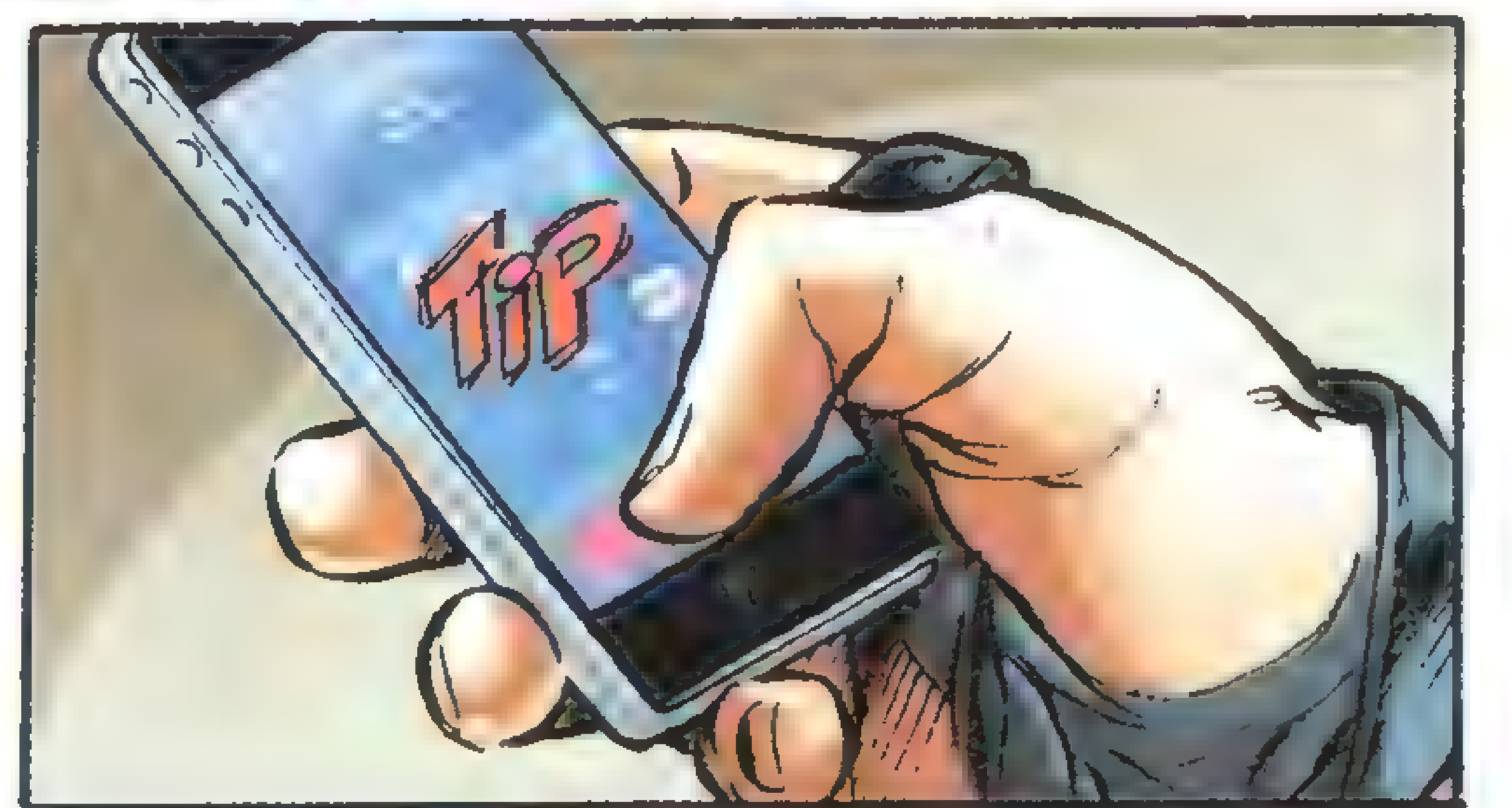
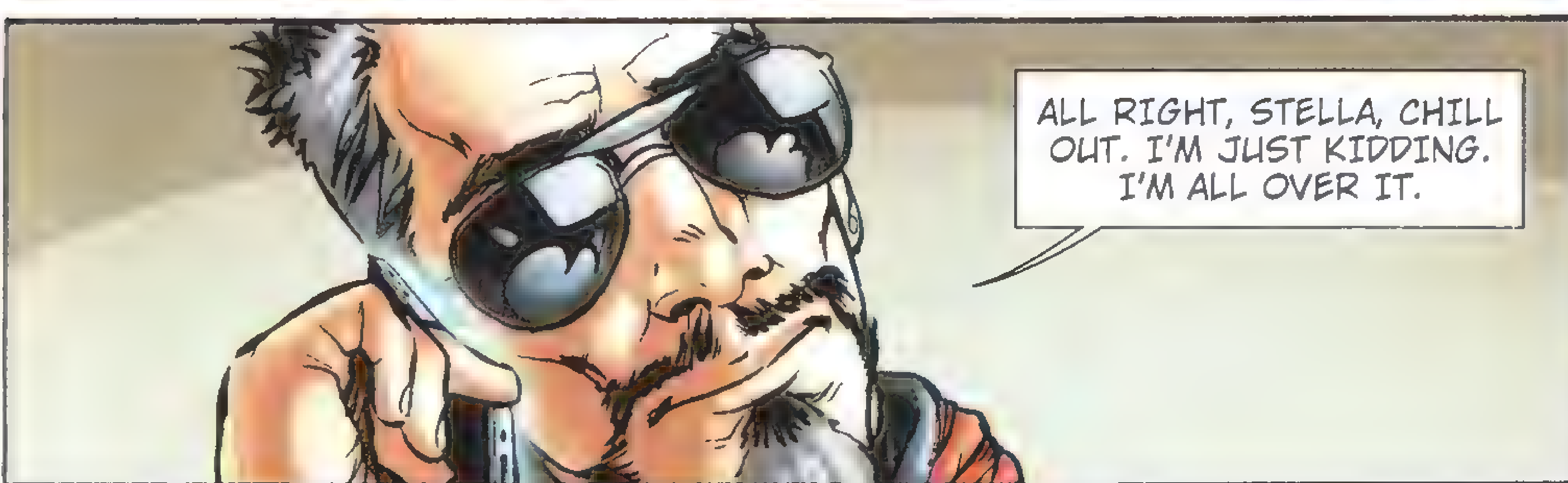
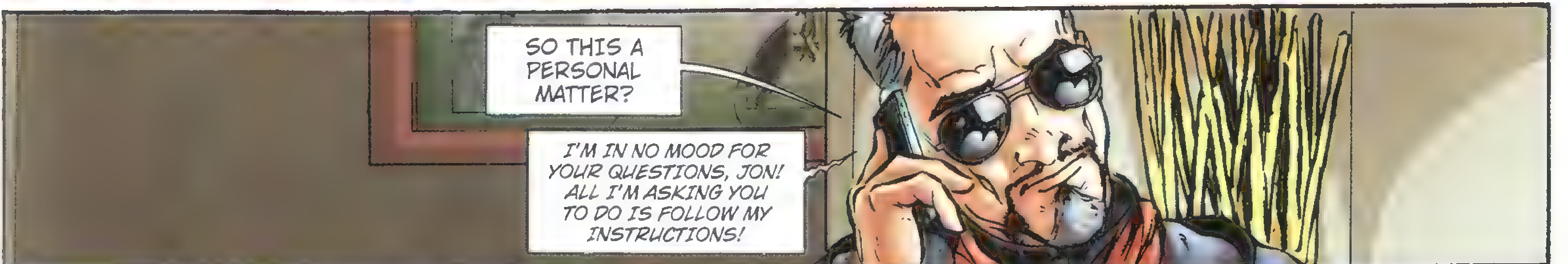
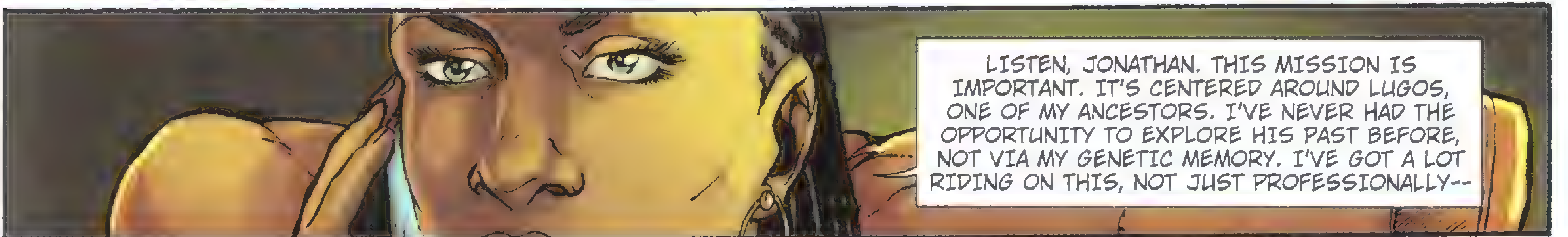
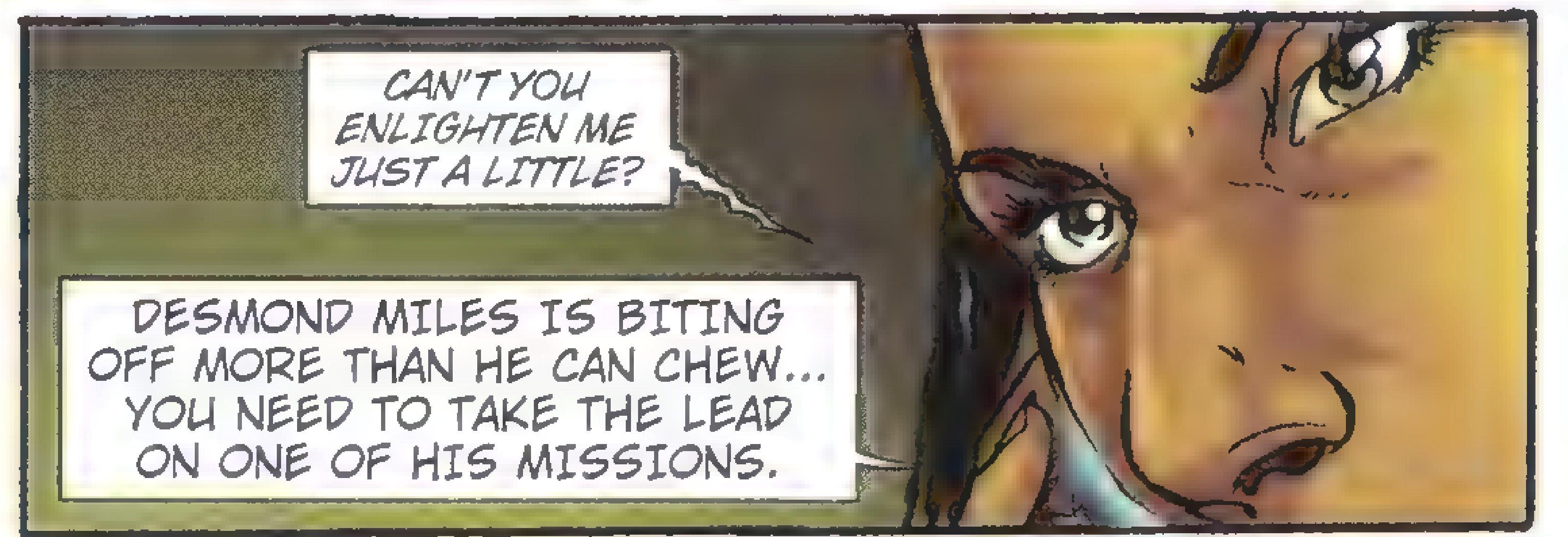
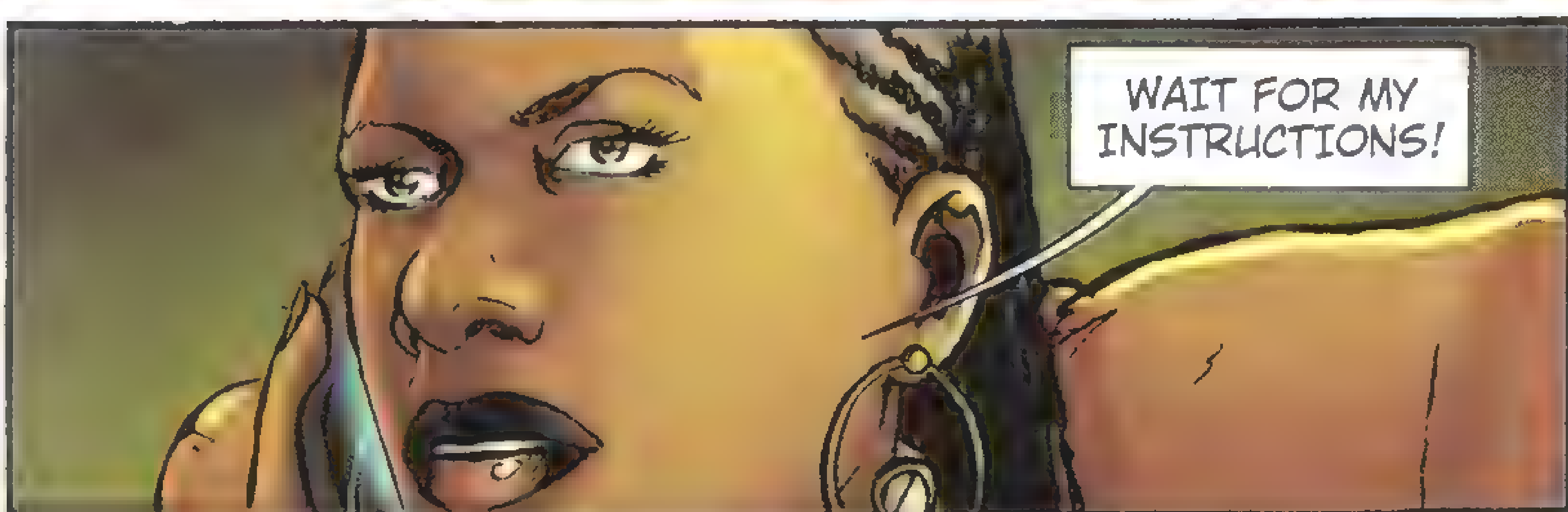
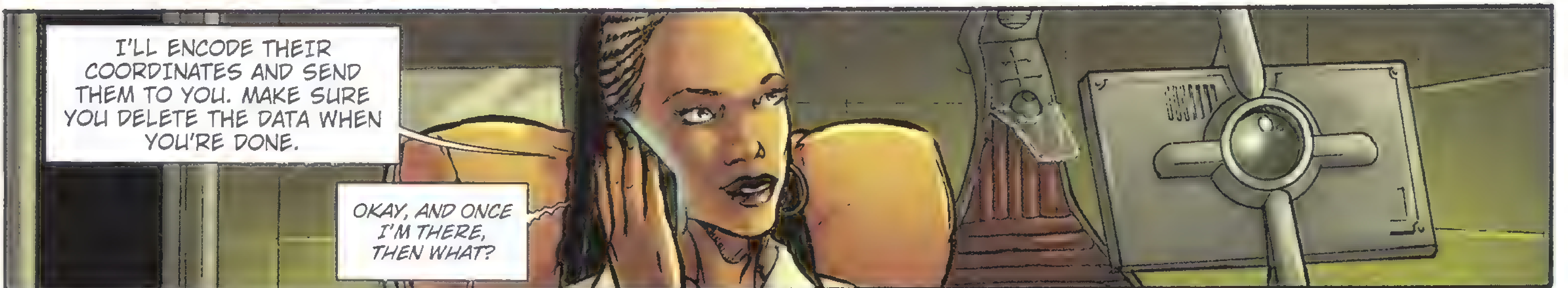
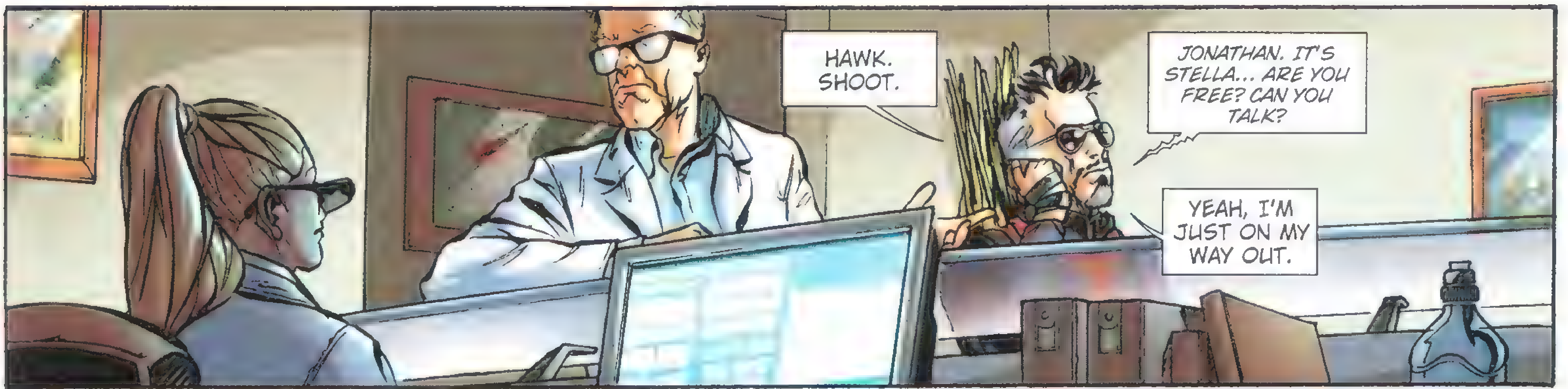
WELL, NONE. IT'S NOT LIKE
THEY COULD BE MAKING ANY
MONEY BY TRAFFICKING
FAULTY ORGANS.

DON'T WORRY. BY NO MEANS DOES
THIS INCIDENT PUT YOUR OPERATION
IN JEOPARDY. I JUST THOUGHT IT
MORE HONEST TO TELL YOU SO YOU
HAVE 'COMPLETE FAITH'.



THANKS, DOC.
I APPRECIATE IT.

EXCUSE
ME...



ITALY. THREE DAYS LATER.

EEEEEEK!

BEEBEEEP!

HAWK. TALK
TO ME,
STELLA...

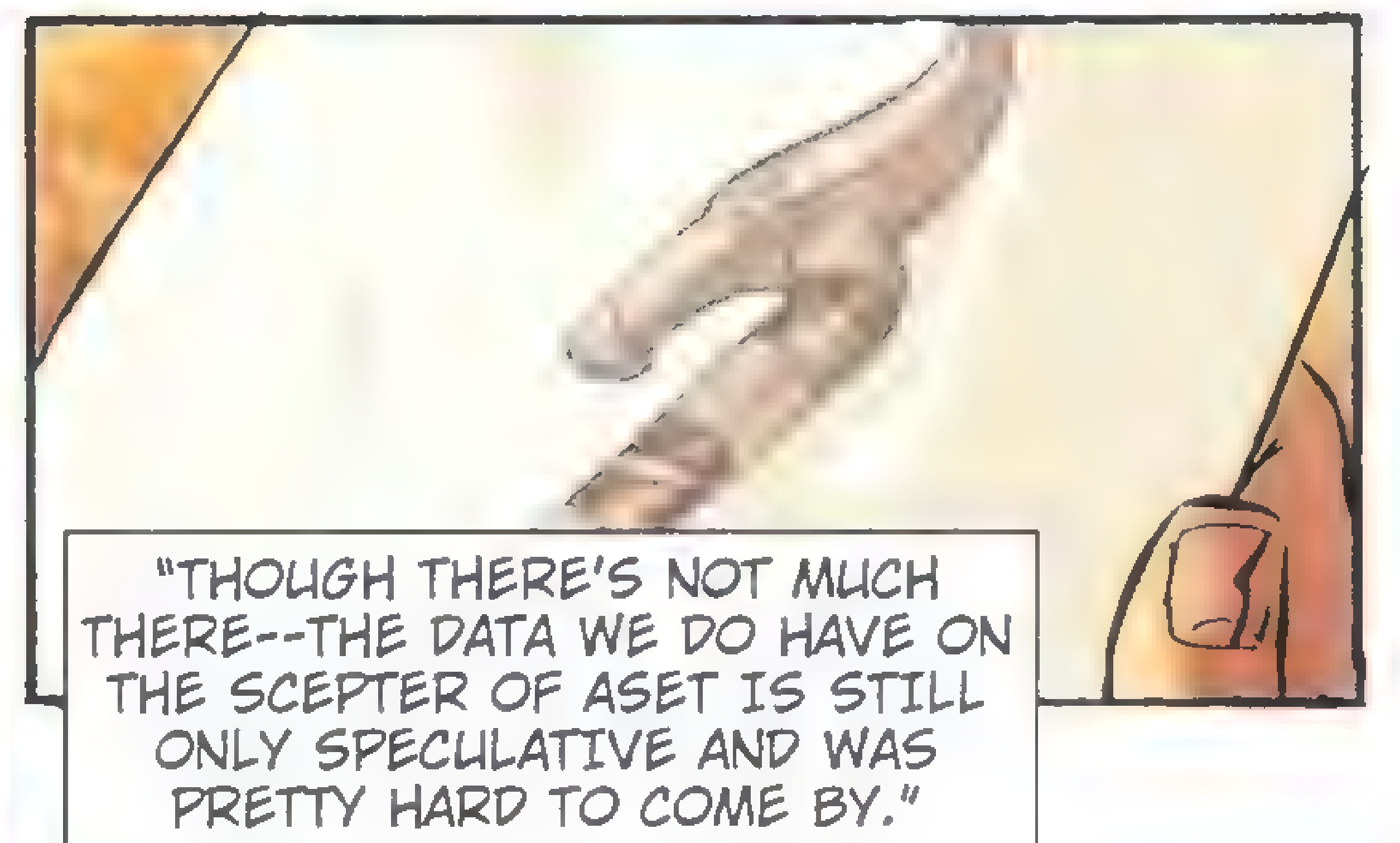
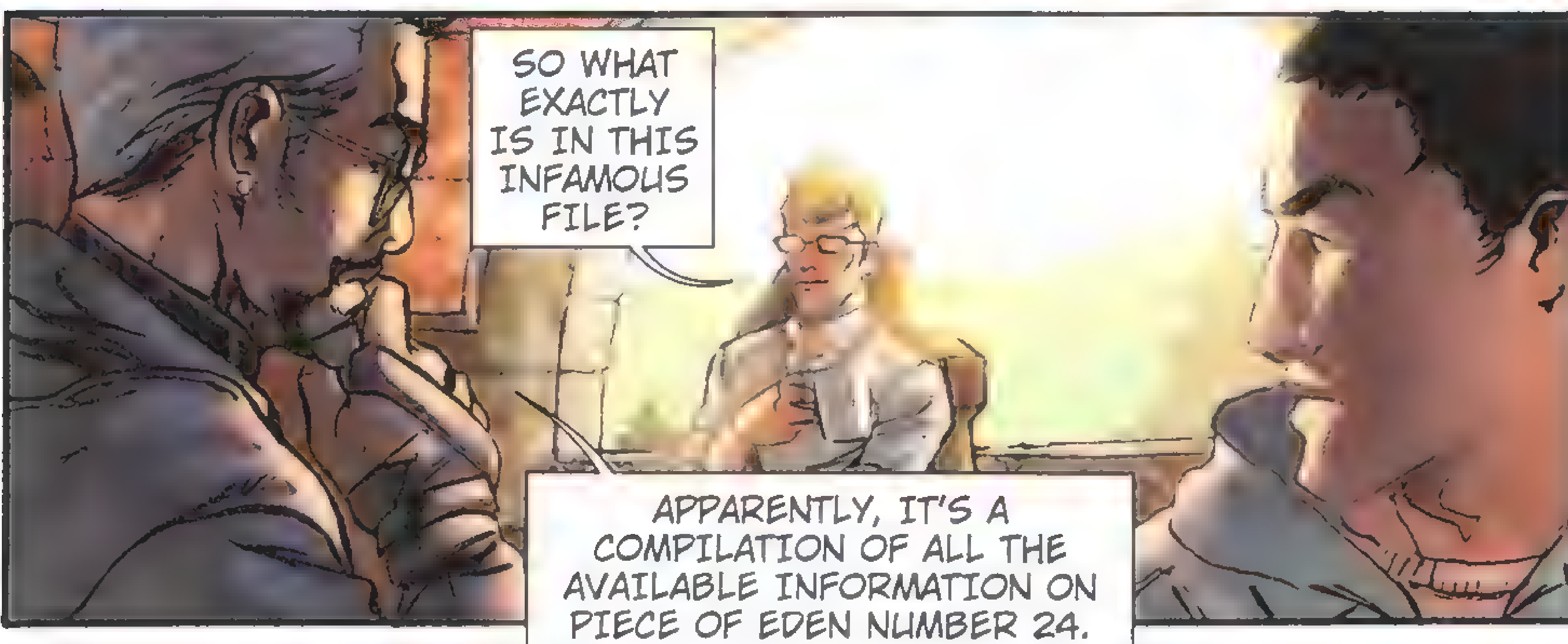
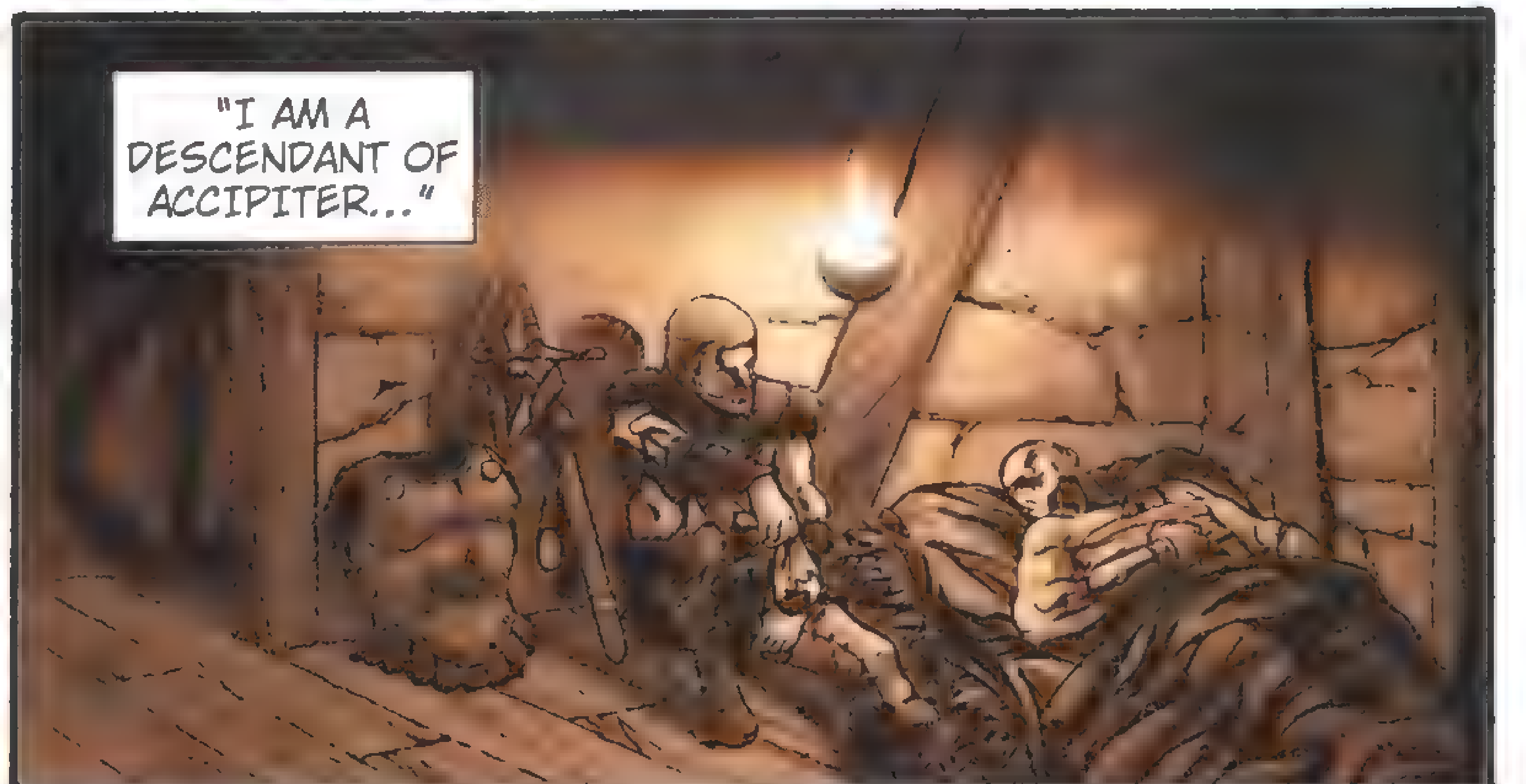
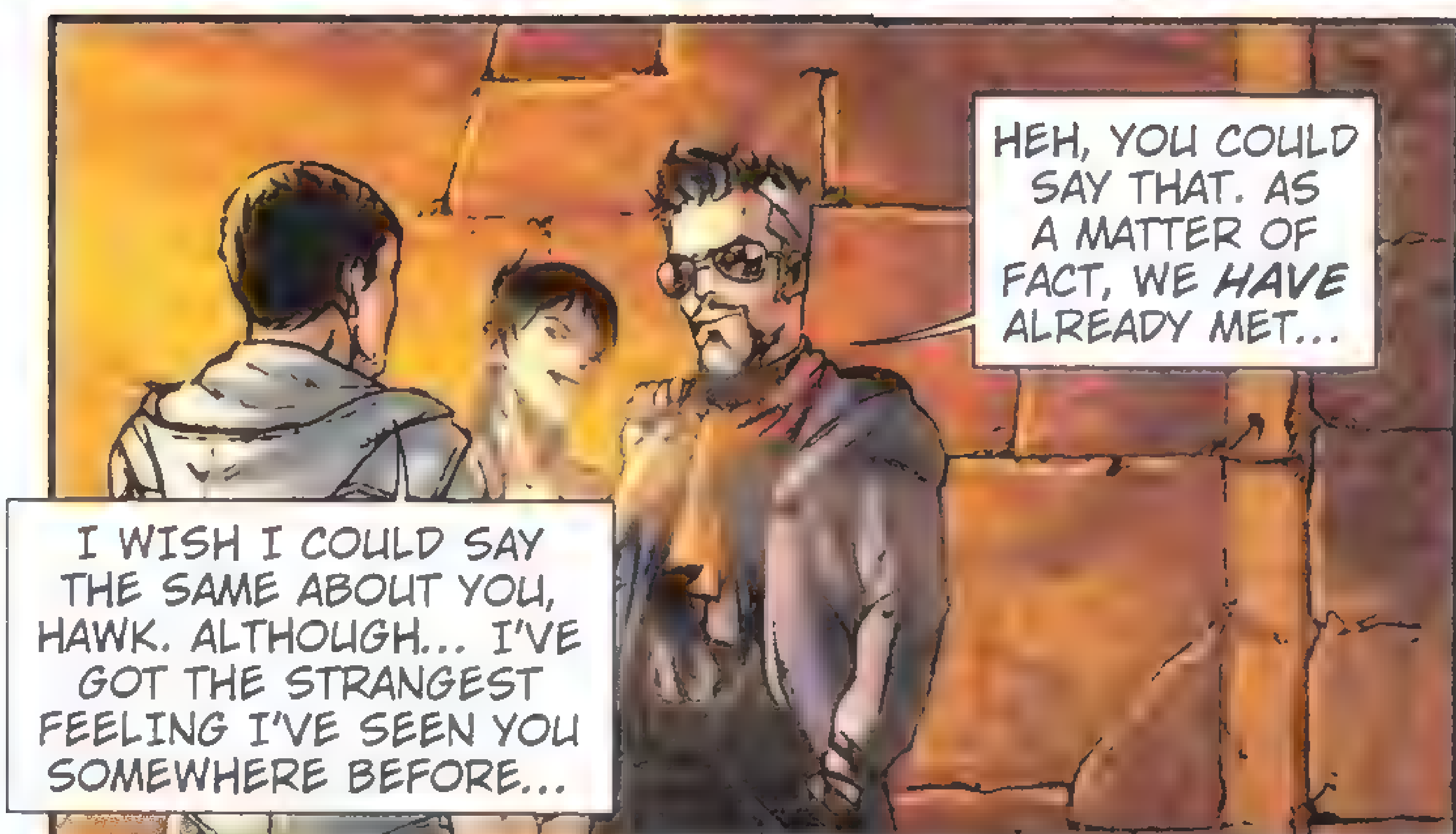
HOW FAR AWAY ARE YOU?

ACCORDING TO THE GPS,
THERE'S A FEW MILES LEFT ON
THIS ROAD BEFORE I ARRIVE
AT MONTERIGGIONI...

GREAT. THE OTHER
CELLS HAVE JUST
AGREED TO LET YOU
LEAD THE MISSION.

YOU NEED TO RECOVER
THE DOSSIER THAT I
DISPATCHED TO THEM, AS
WELL AS THE DATA THEY'VE
COLLECTED ON THEIR SIDE.
YOU'LL TAKE DESMOND'S
PLACE FROM NOW ON.

OK, GOT IT.
I'LL KEEP YOU
UPDATED.





THE SCEPTER OF
ASET? THIS IS THE
OBJECT LUGOS WAS
TALKING ABOUT IN
HIS MESSAGE! CAN
YOU BELIEVE IT
STILL EXISTS?

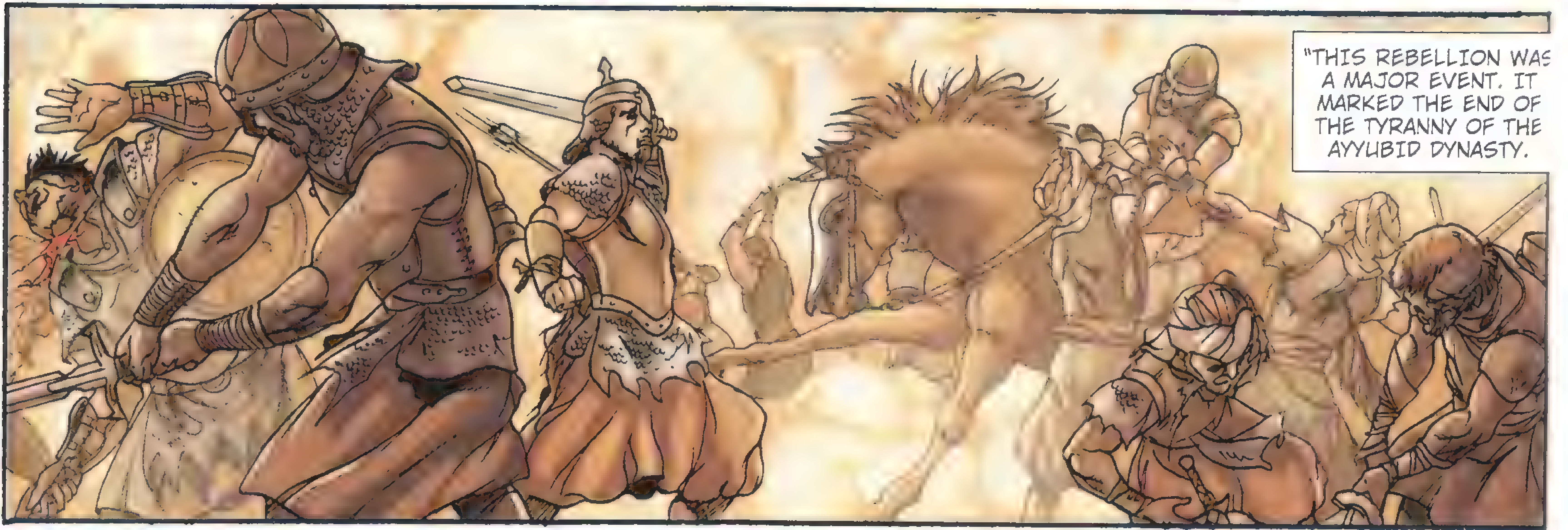
I CAN'T TELL YOU
HOW ANNOYED I AM
THAT I DIDN'T FIND
IT MYSELF!

THE RESULTS FROM OUR RESEARCH ARE
OFTEN UNPREDICTABLE AND ERRATIC, DESMOND.
THIS ISN'T SOME HOLLYWOOD MOVIE WHERE
ALL THE LOOSE ENDS GET NEATLY TIED UP--

STELLA GATHERED
RECENT INTEL THAT
SUGGESTED THE
OBJECT WAS AN
ESSENTIAL TOOL
IN THE TRIUMPH
OF THE SLAVE
REBELLION THAT
TOOK PLACE IN
EGYPT IN 1250.

I GUESS IT'S UP
TO ME TO FIND OUT--
AS WELL AS WHERE
IT'S GOTTEN TO.

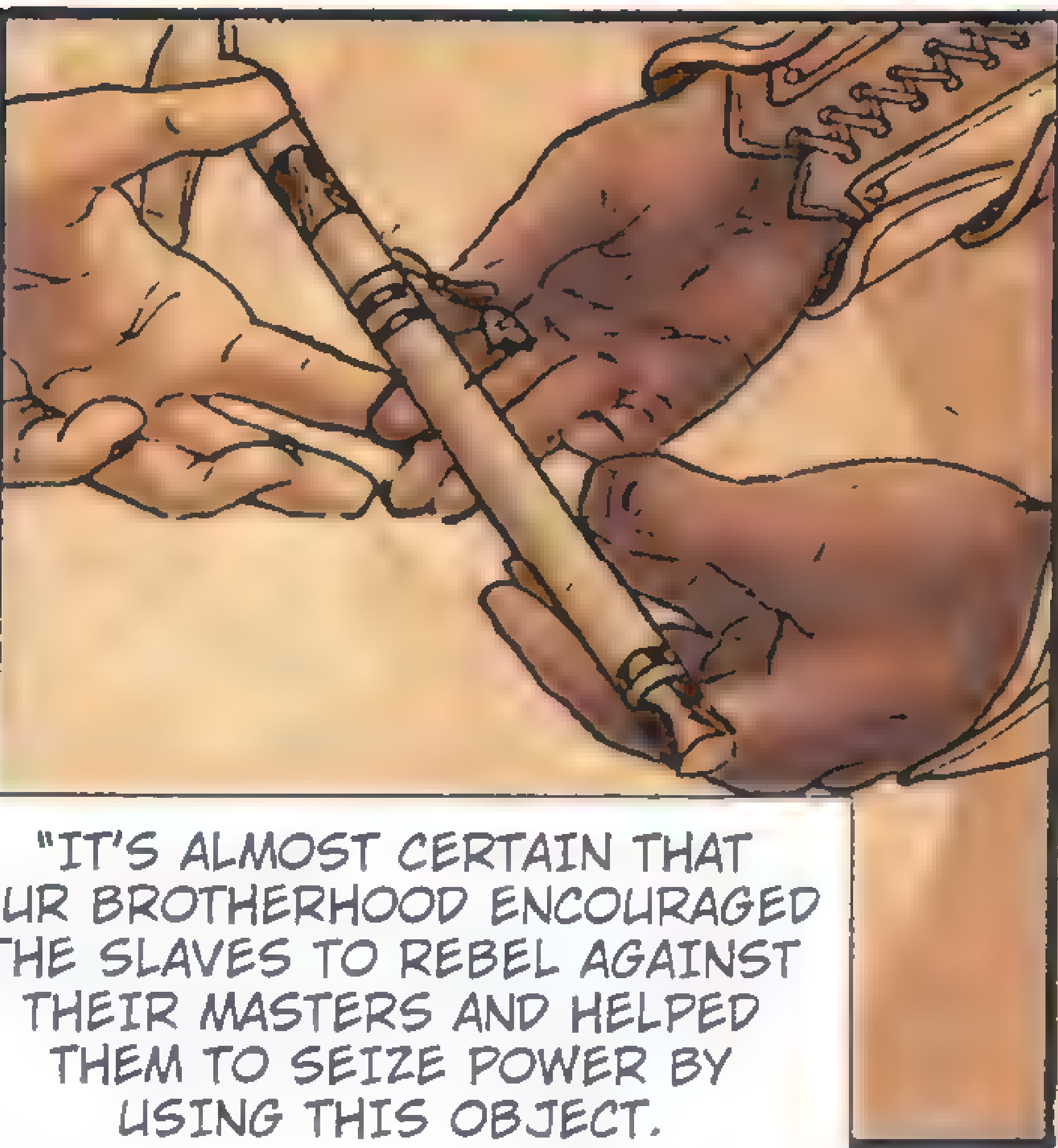
WHAT IS THIS
ARTIFACT? IS IT
JUST A SYMBOL
OF POWER? OR
SOMETHING MORE?



"THIS REBELLION WAS
A MAJOR EVENT. IT
MARKED THE END OF
THE TYRANNY OF THE
AYYUBID DYNASTY.



"FOLLOWING THE
UPRISING OF THE
MAMLUKS, THE
BAHRI DYNASTY WAS
ESTABLISHED IN EGYPT.

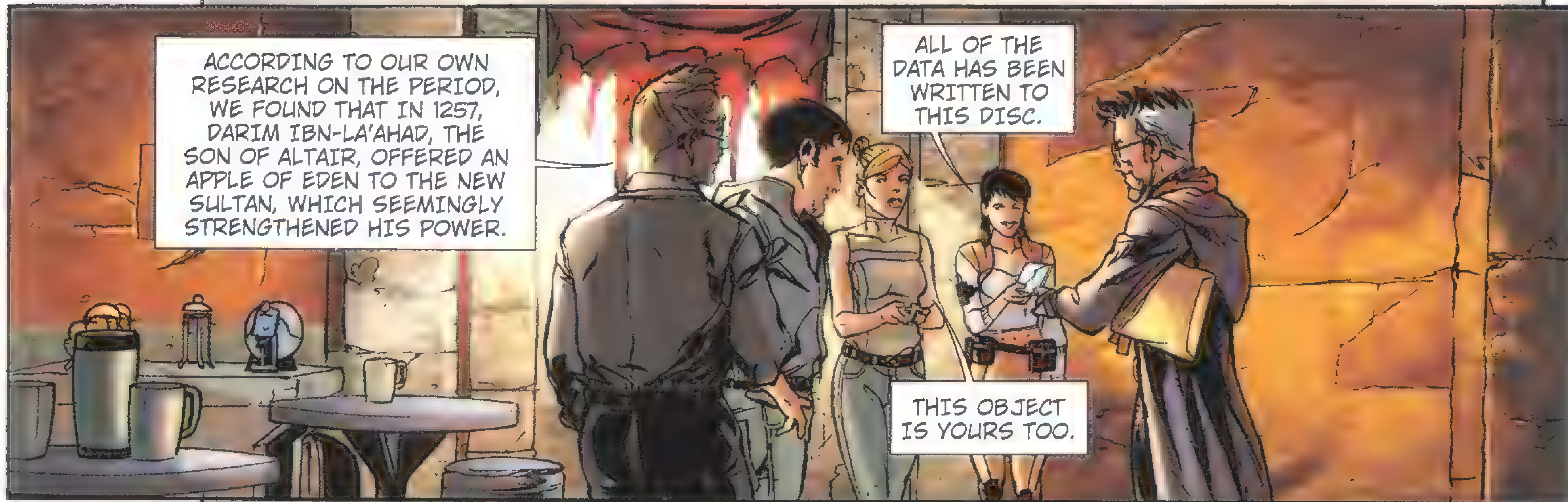


"IT'S ALMOST CERTAIN THAT
OUR BROTHERHOOD ENCOURAGED
THE SLAVES TO REBEL AGAINST
THEIR MASTERS AND HELPED
THEM TO SEIZE POWER BY
USING THIS OBJECT.



"THANKS TO THE
GODDESS' SCEPTER,
THE SLAVES BECAME
THE MASTERS."

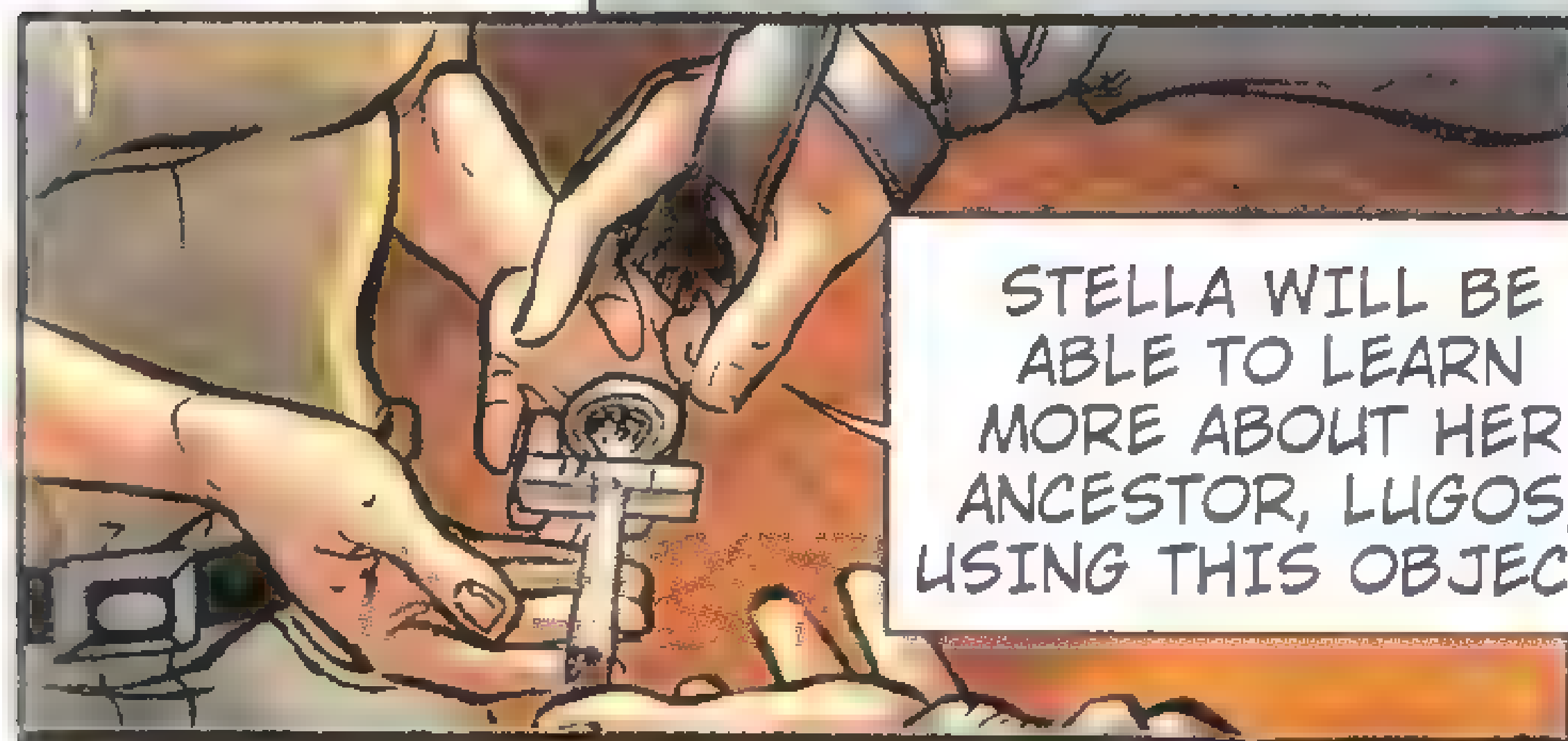
BY THE POWER OF
THE DIVINE, THE
LAST WILL BE THE
FIRST AND SHALL
REIGN FOR ALL
ETERNITY!



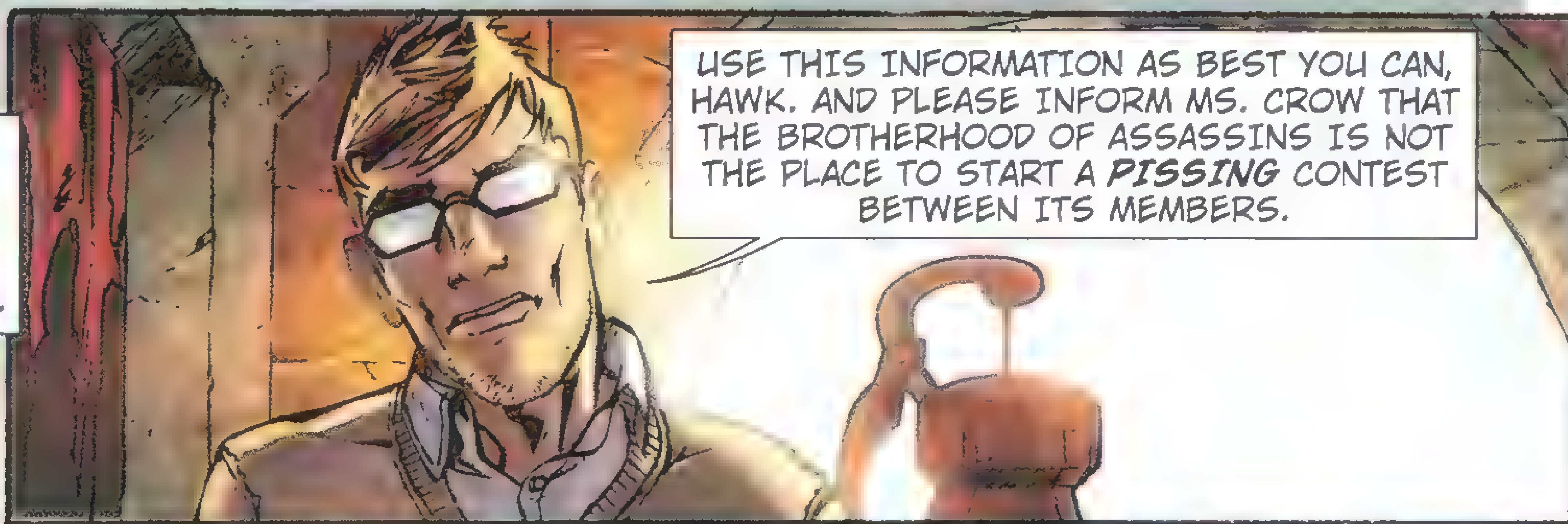
ACCORDING TO OUR OWN RESEARCH ON THE PERIOD, WE FOUND THAT IN 1257, DARIM IBN-LA'AHAD, THE SON OF ALTAIR, OFFERED AN APPLE OF EDEN TO THE NEW SULTAN, WHICH SEEMINGLY STRENGTHENED HIS POWER.

ALL OF THE DATA HAS BEEN WRITTEN TO THIS DISC.

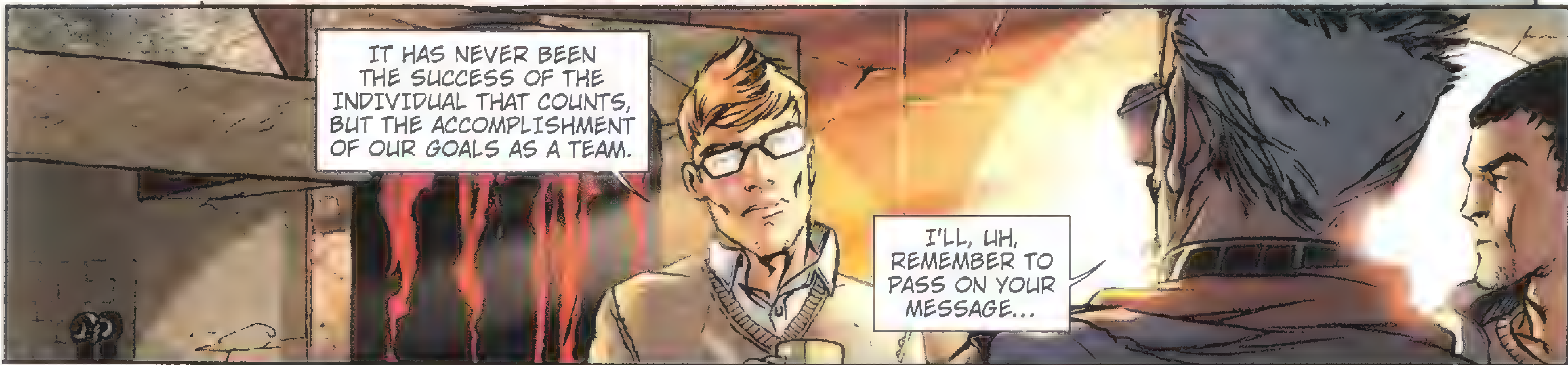
THIS OBJECT IS YOURS TOO.



STELLA WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HER ANCESTOR, LUGOS, USING THIS OBJECT.



USE THIS INFORMATION AS BEST YOU CAN, HAWK. AND PLEASE INFORM MS. CROW THAT THE BROTHERHOOD OF ASSASSINS IS NOT THE PLACE TO START A *PISSING* CONTEST BETWEEN ITS MEMBERS.



IT HAS NEVER BEEN THE SUCCESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL THAT COUNTS, BUT THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF OUR GOALS AS A TEAM.

I'LL, UH, REMEMBER TO PASS ON YOUR MESSAGE...

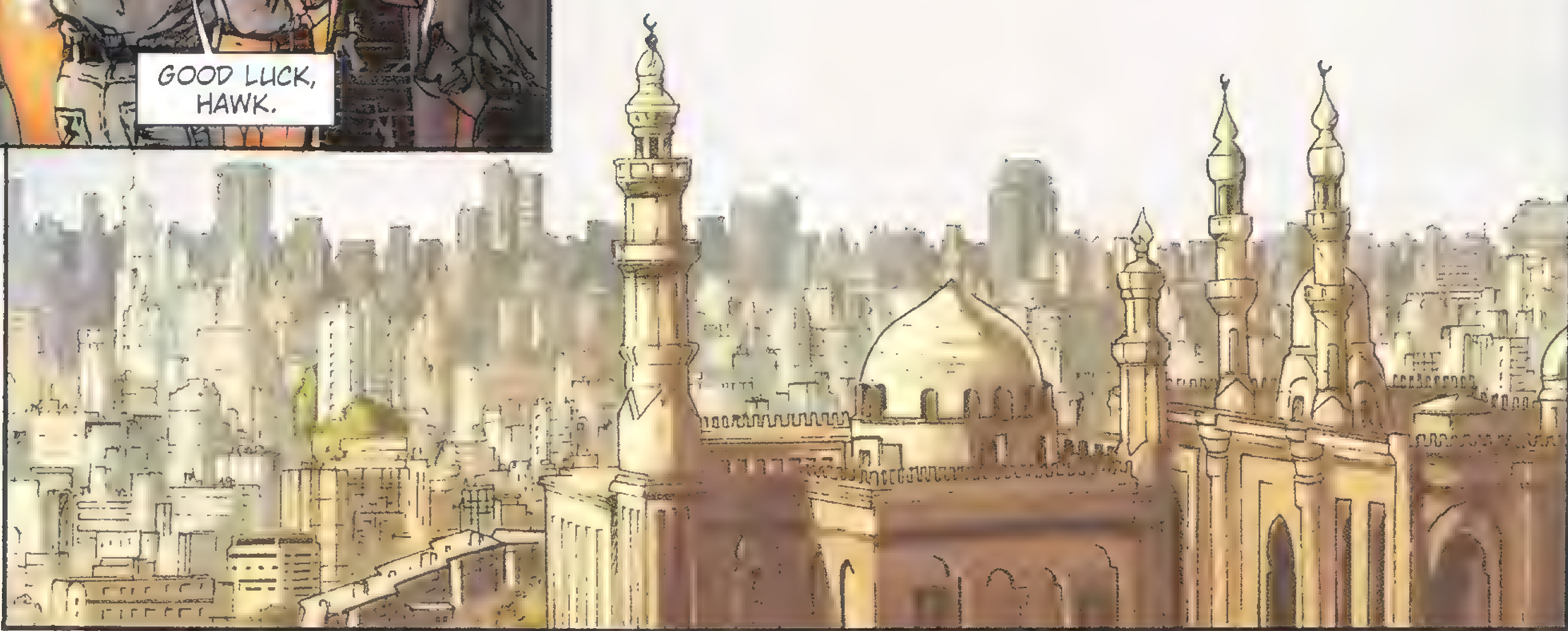


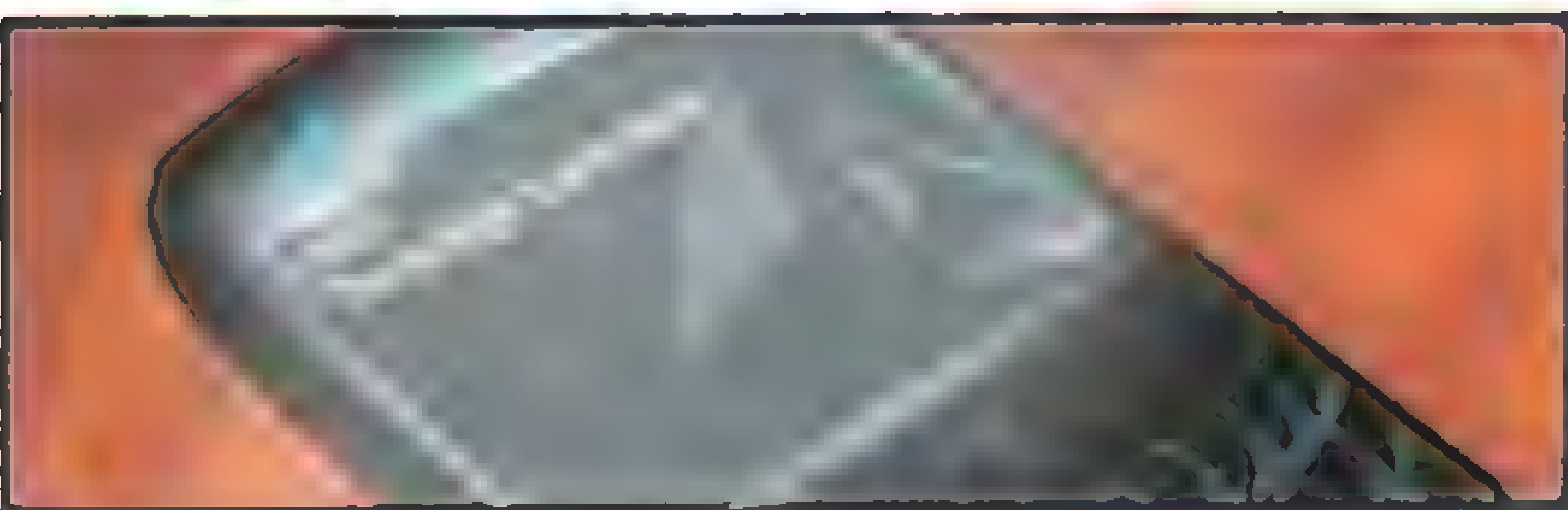
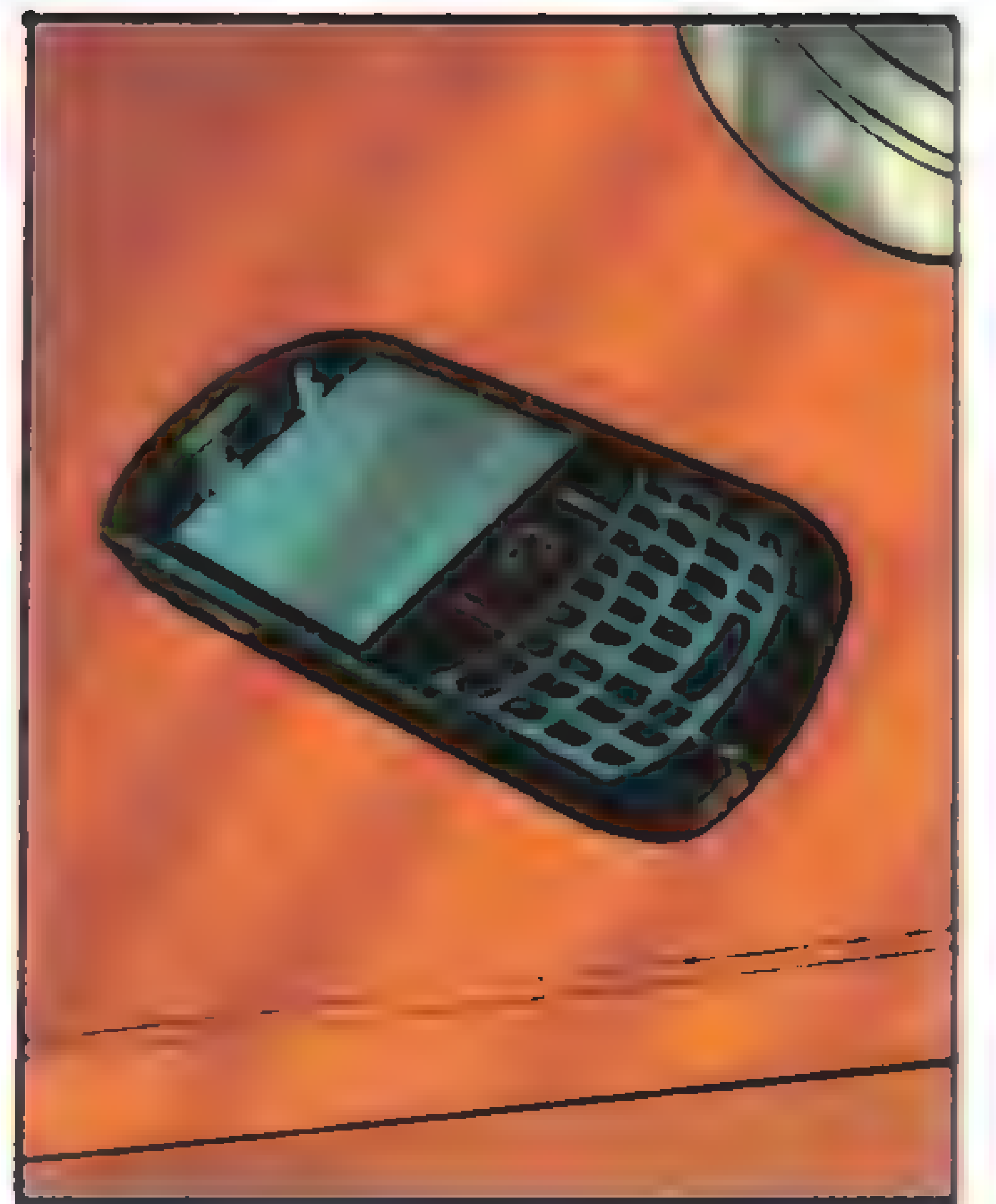
RIGHT--GOTTA GO. GOOD LUCK, AND I'LL SEE YA AROUND!

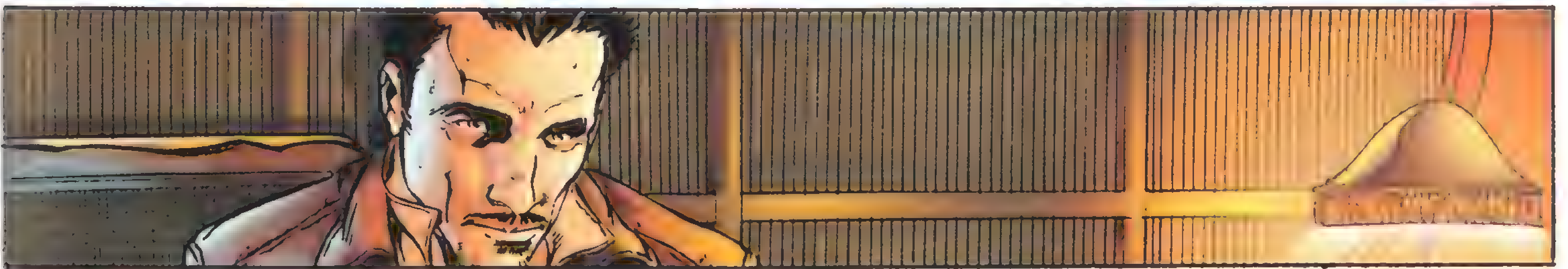
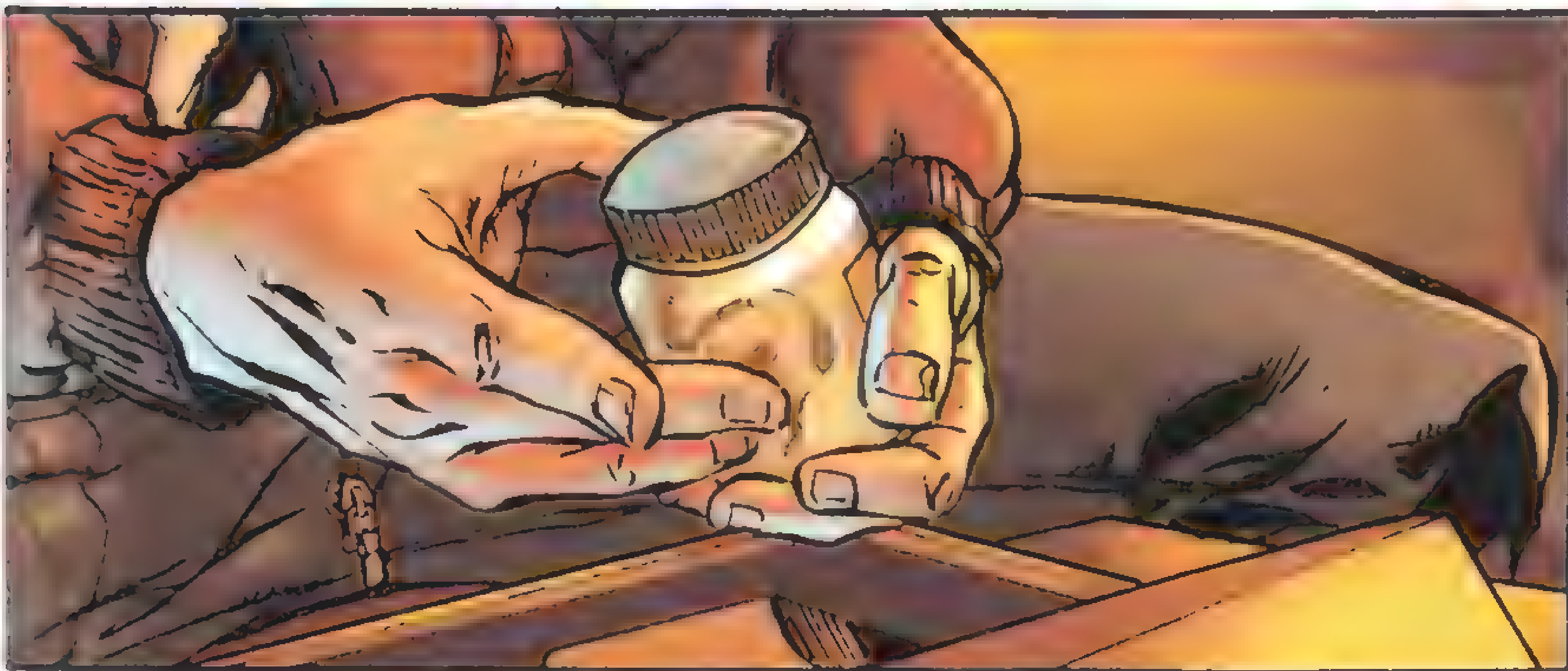
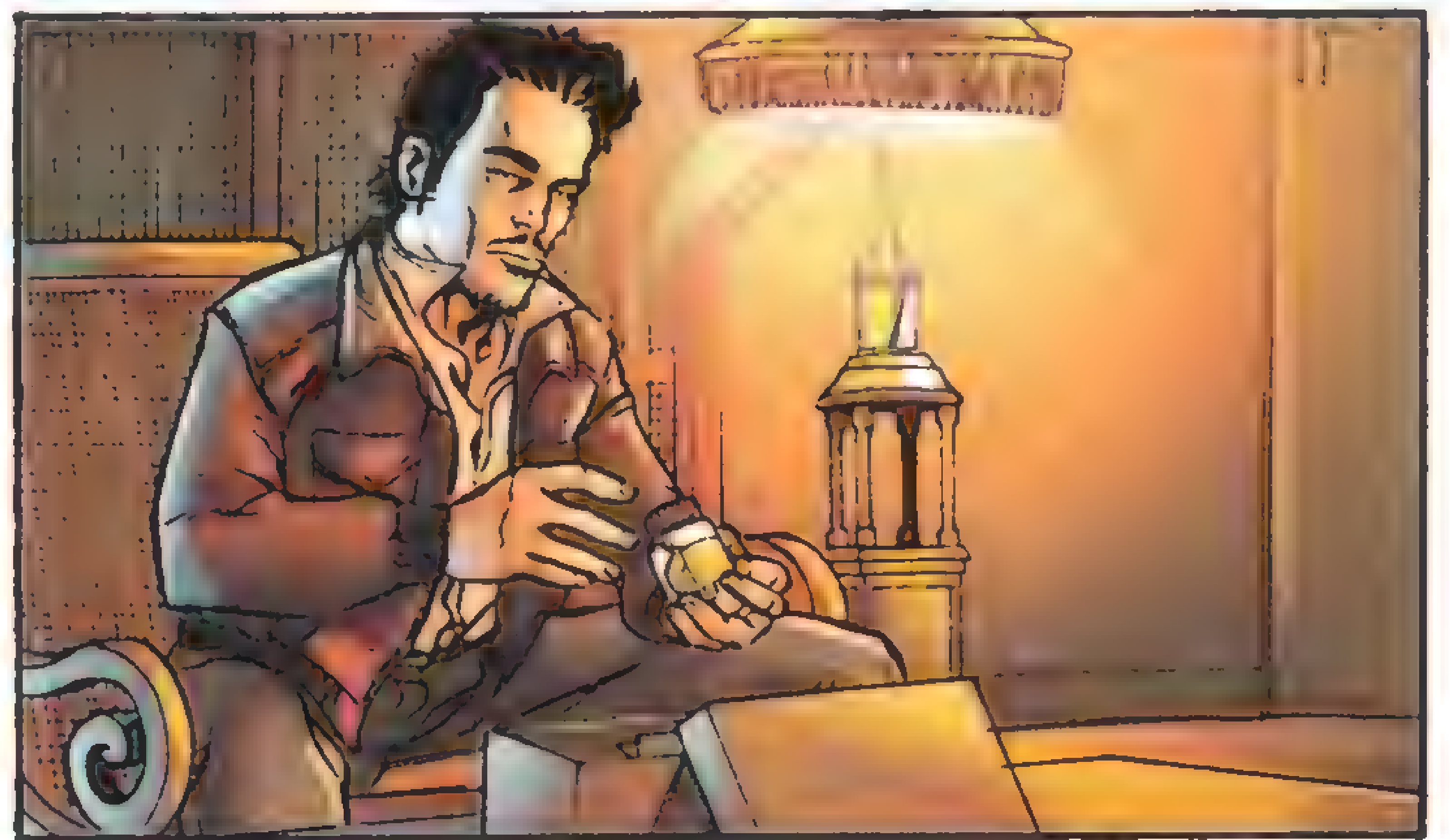
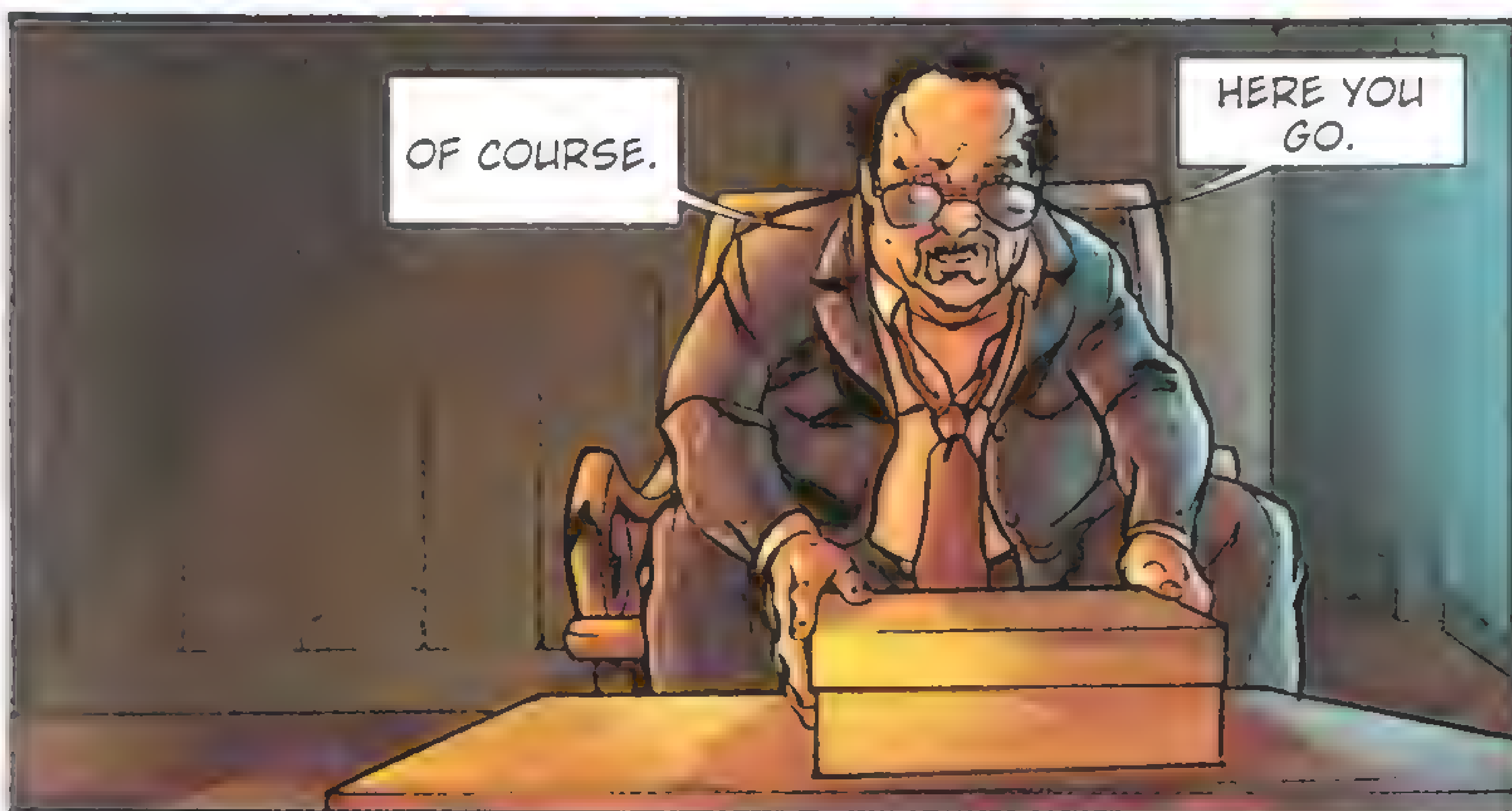
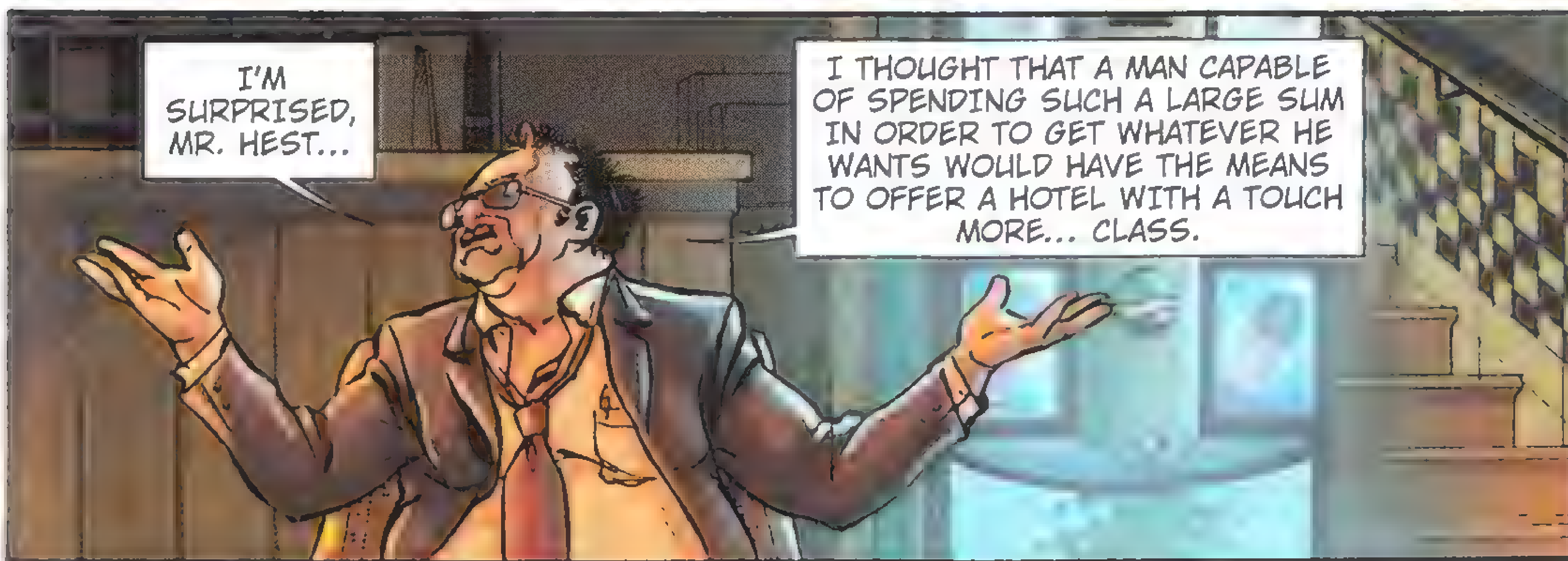
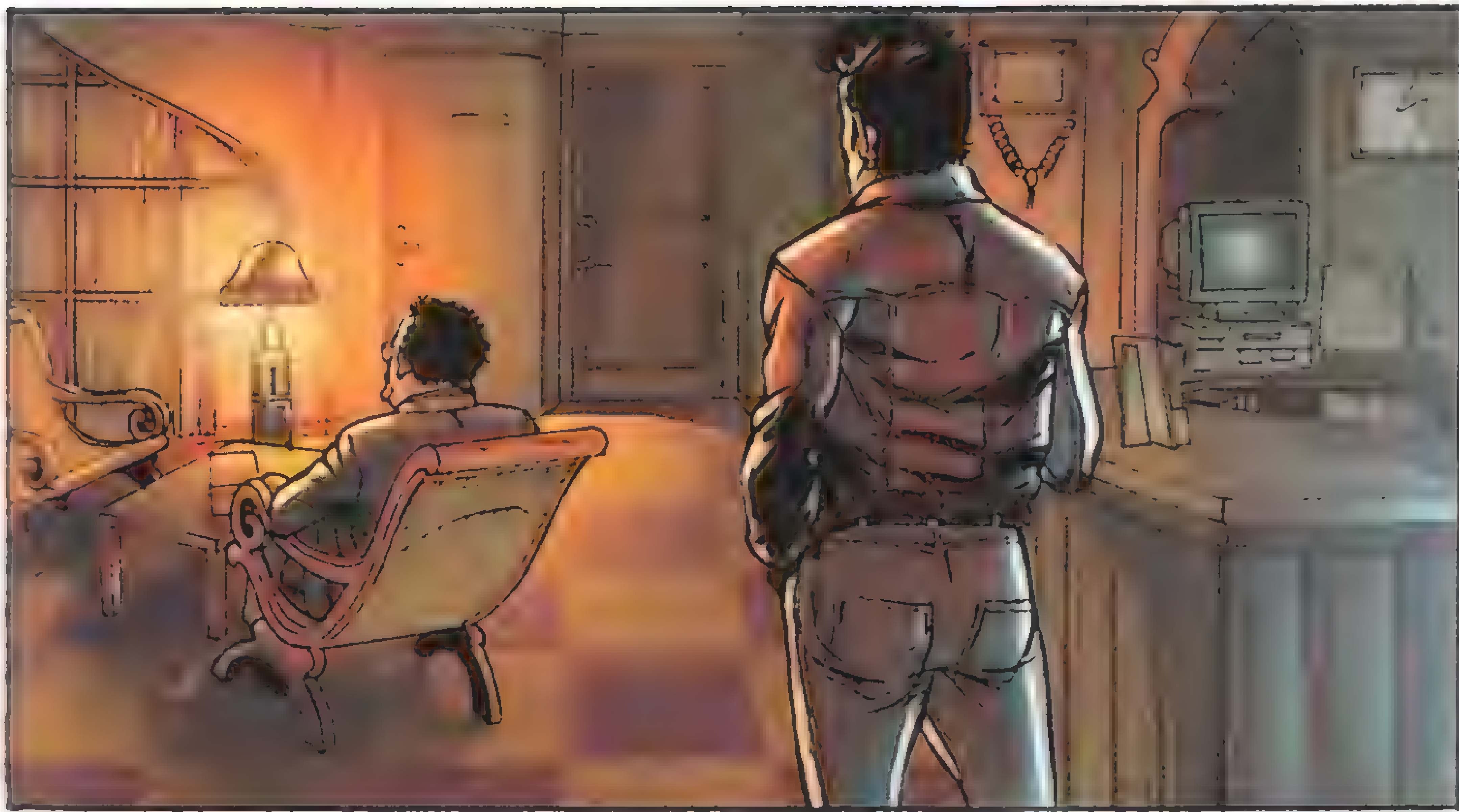
THANKS, JONATHAN.

GOOD LUCK, HAWK.

CAIRO. THE NEXT DAY.





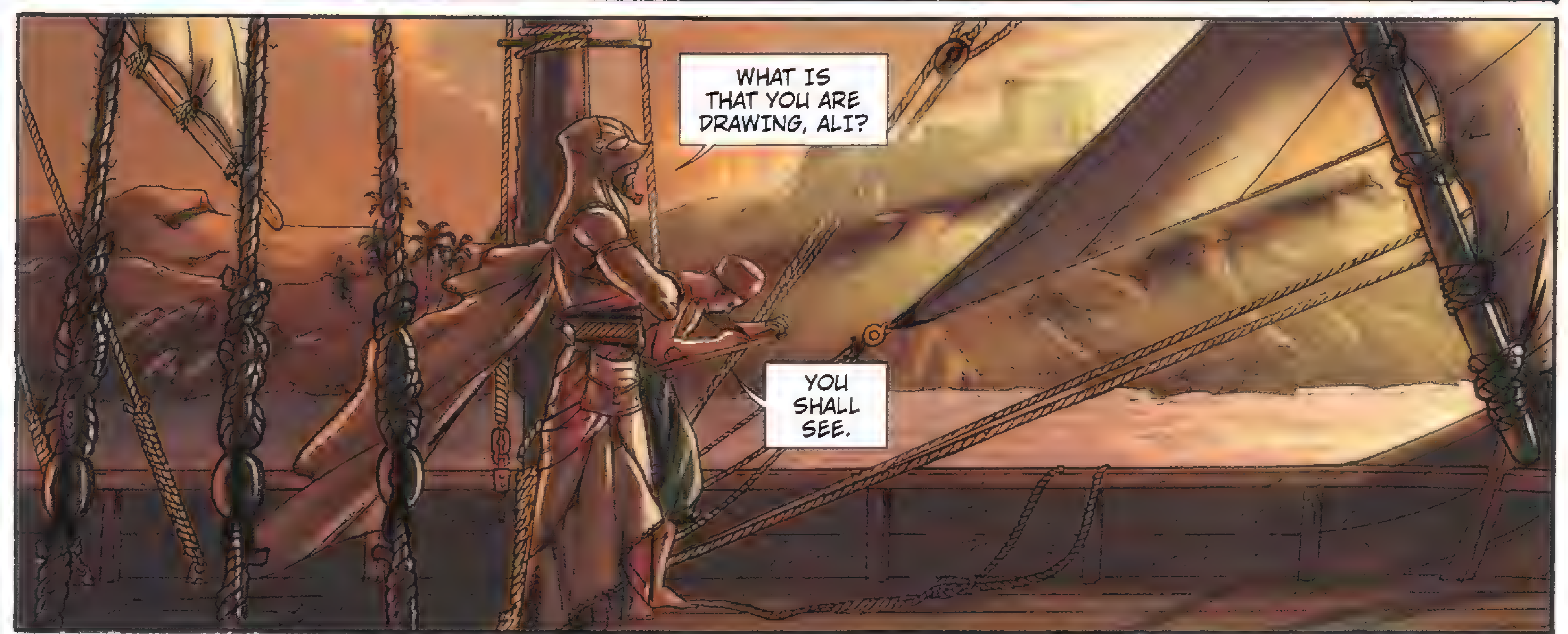
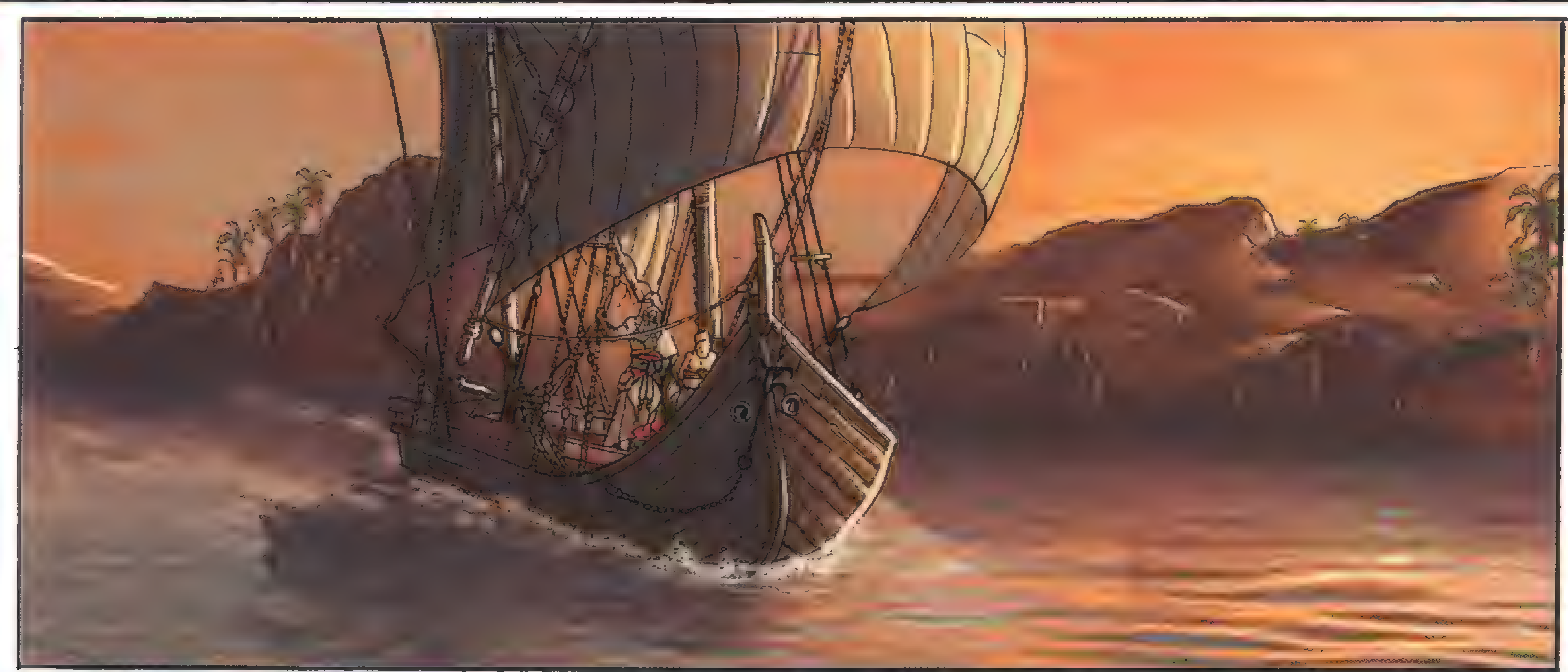


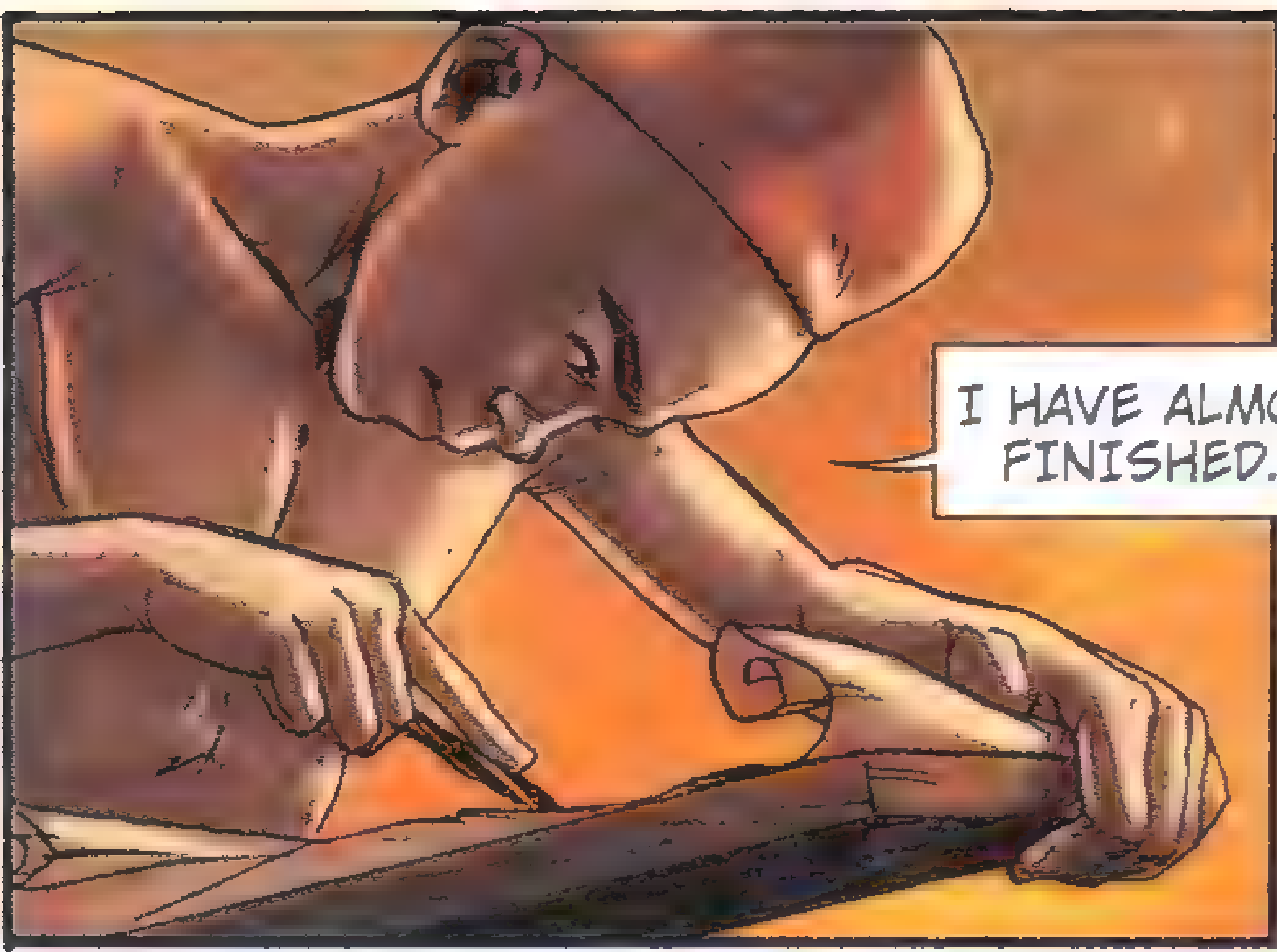


VERIFY THE ORIGIN OF THE PRODUCT FOR YOURSELF. A DNA TEST WAS CARRIED OUT. THERE'S A COPY OF IT INSIDE THE PACKAGE.

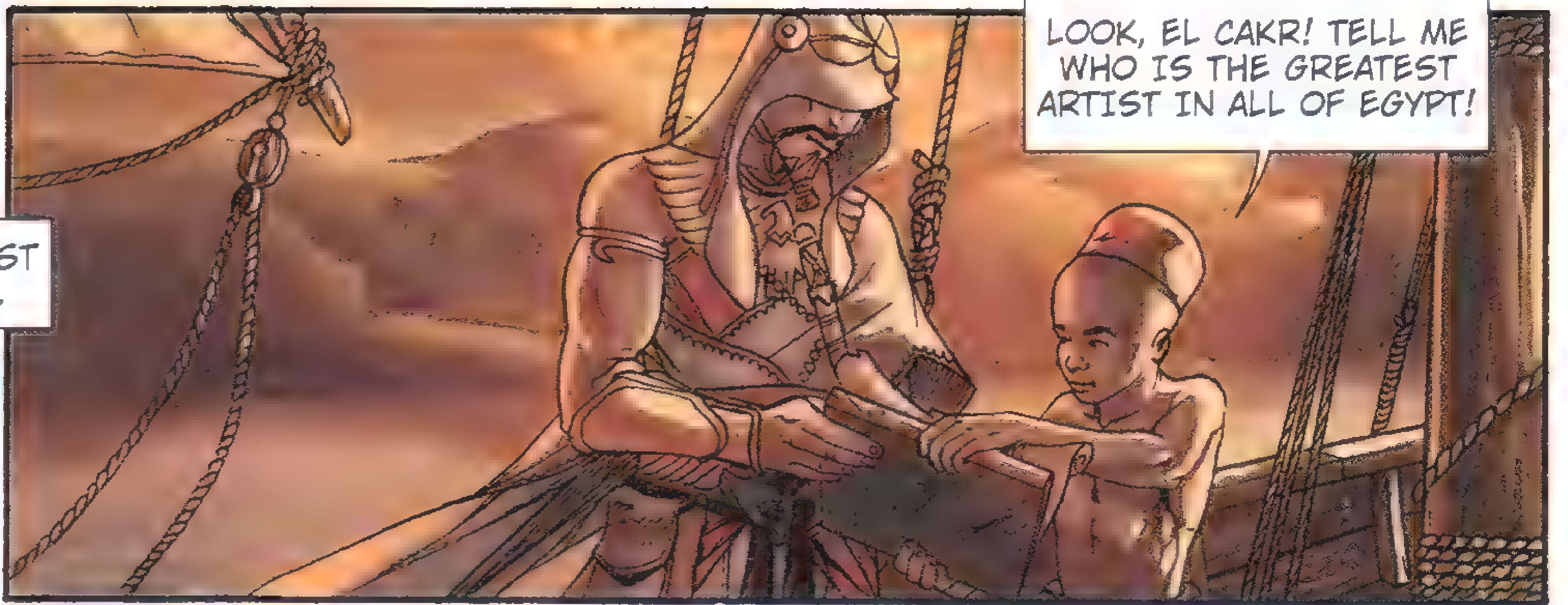


EGYPT. SOMEWHERE ON
THE NILE. 1340.





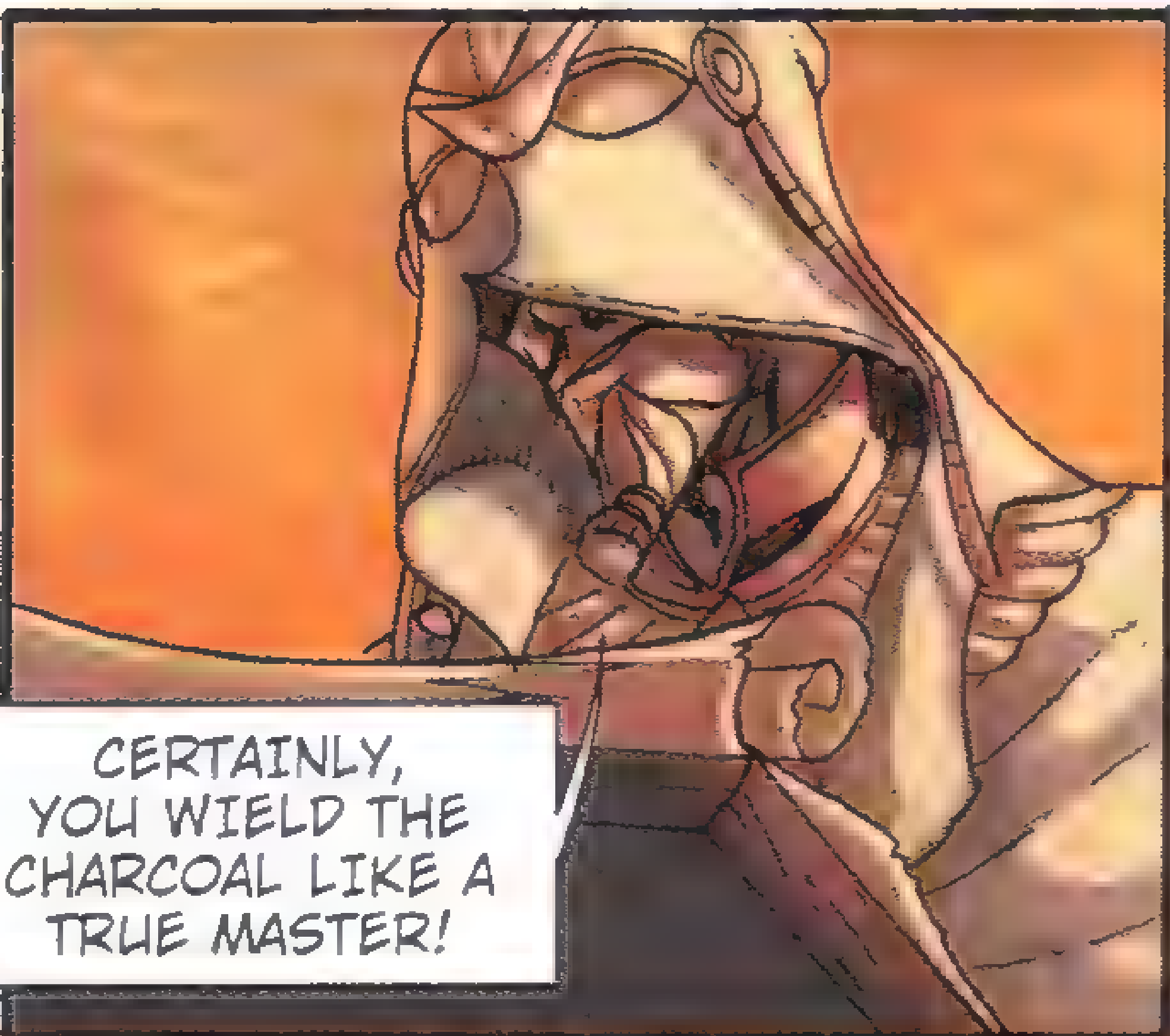
I HAVE ALMOST FINISHED...



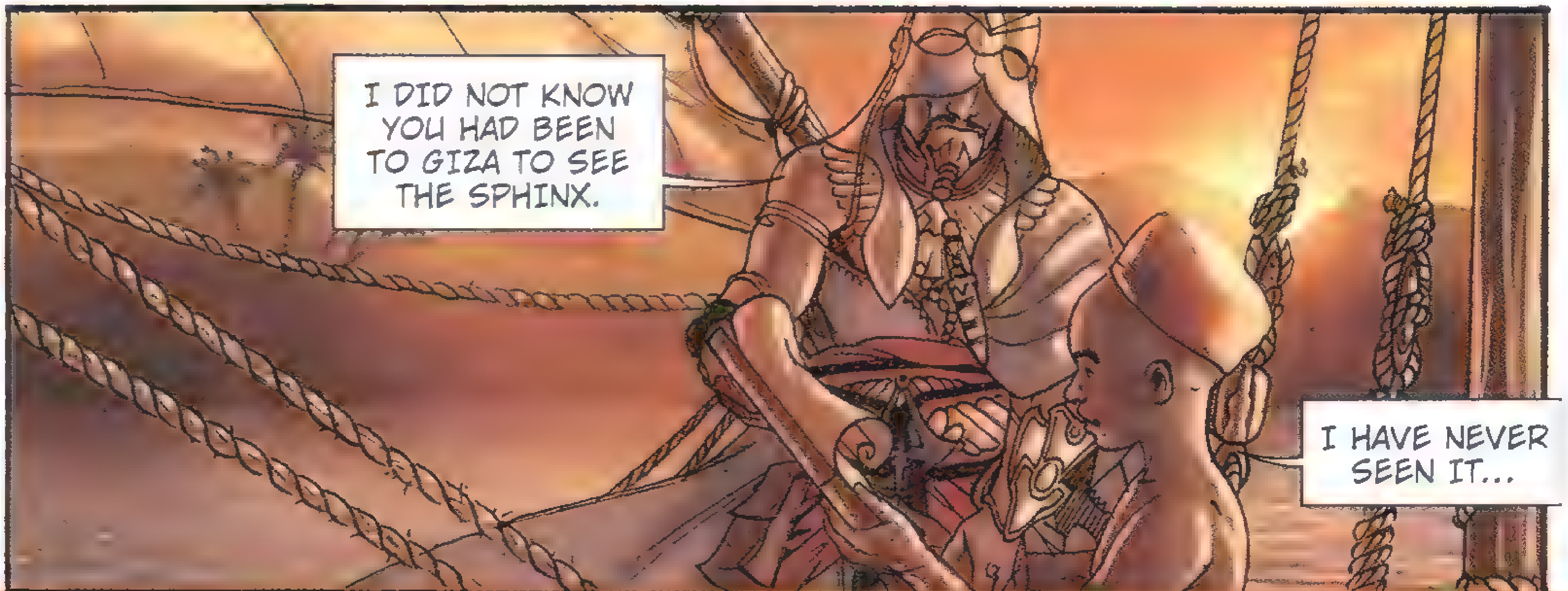
LOOK, EL CAKR! TELL ME WHO IS THE GREATEST ARTIST IN ALL OF EGYPT!



SPLENDID!



CERTAINLY, YOU WIELD THE CHARCOAL LIKE A TRUE MASTER!



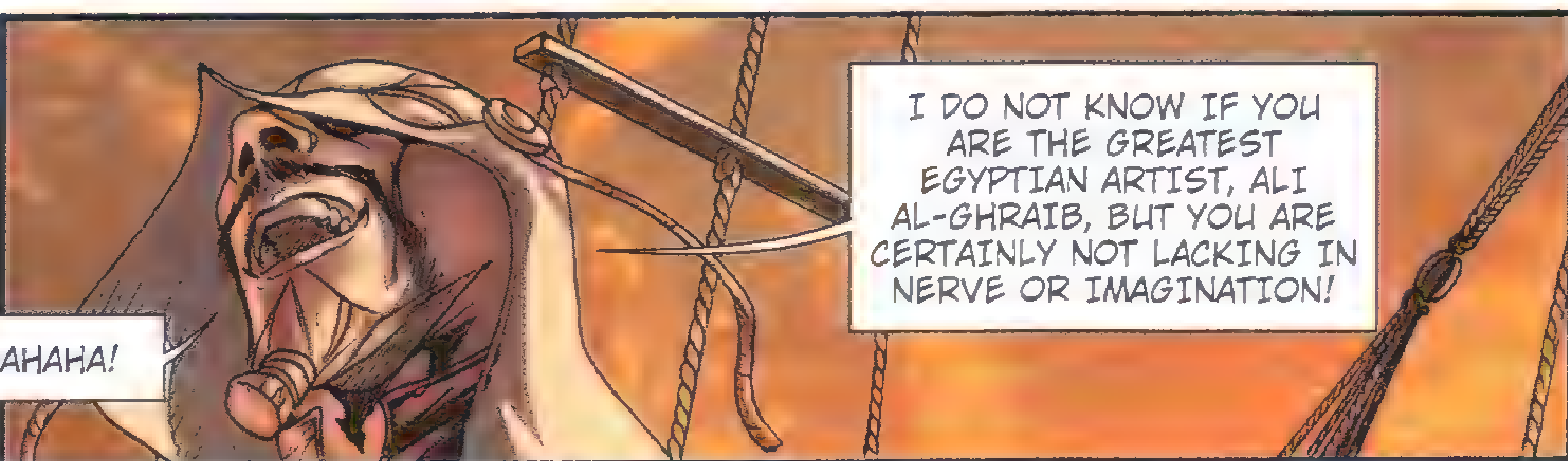
I DID NOT KNOW YOU HAD BEEN TO GIZA TO SEE THE SPHINX.

I HAVE NEVER SEEN IT...



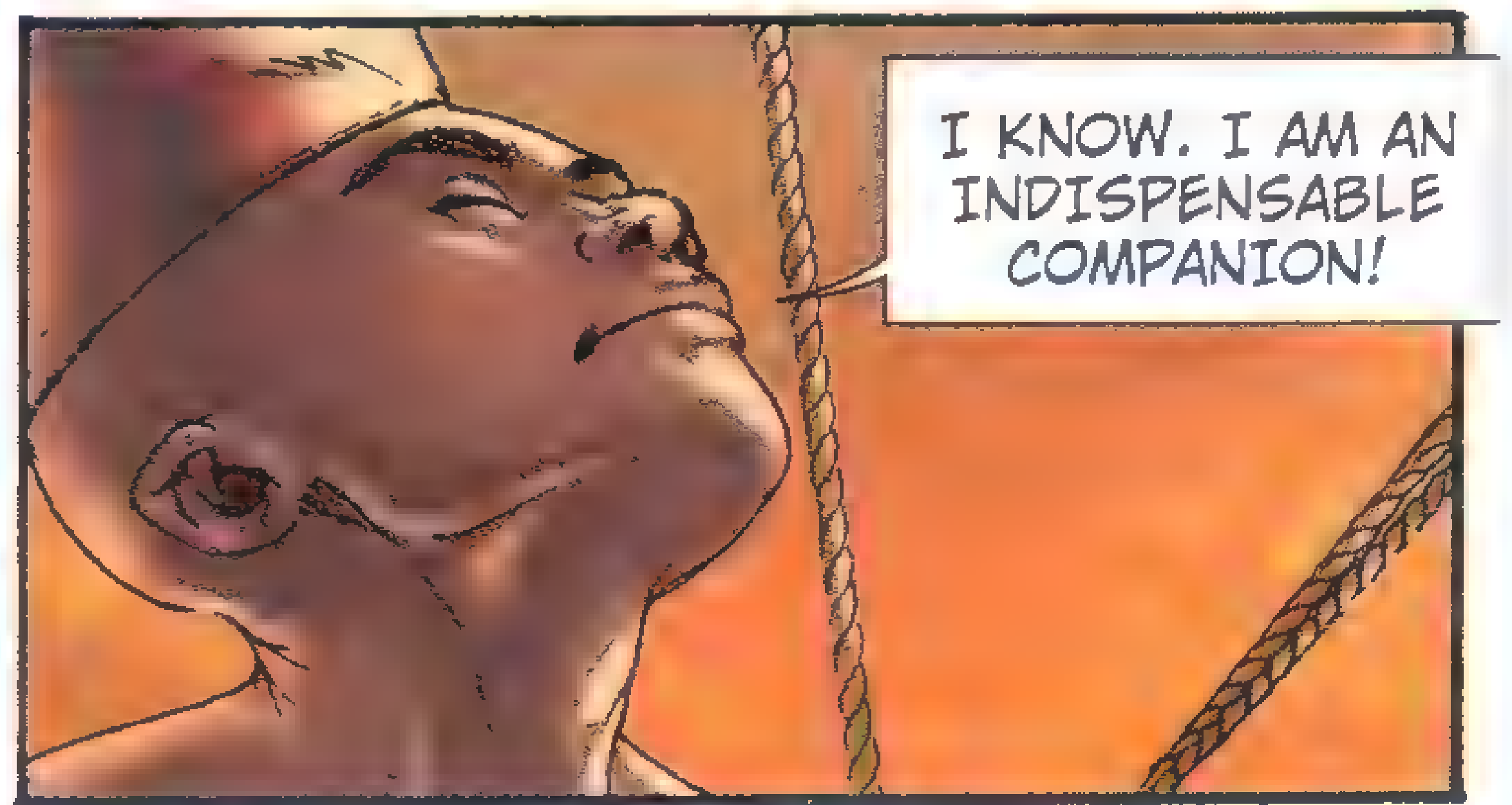
BUT HOW ARE YOU ABLE TO SKETCH IT WITH SUCH PRECISION?

I MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT IT HERE AND THERE. PEOPLE DESCRIBED IT TO ME... AND HERE IT IS!



HAHAHA!

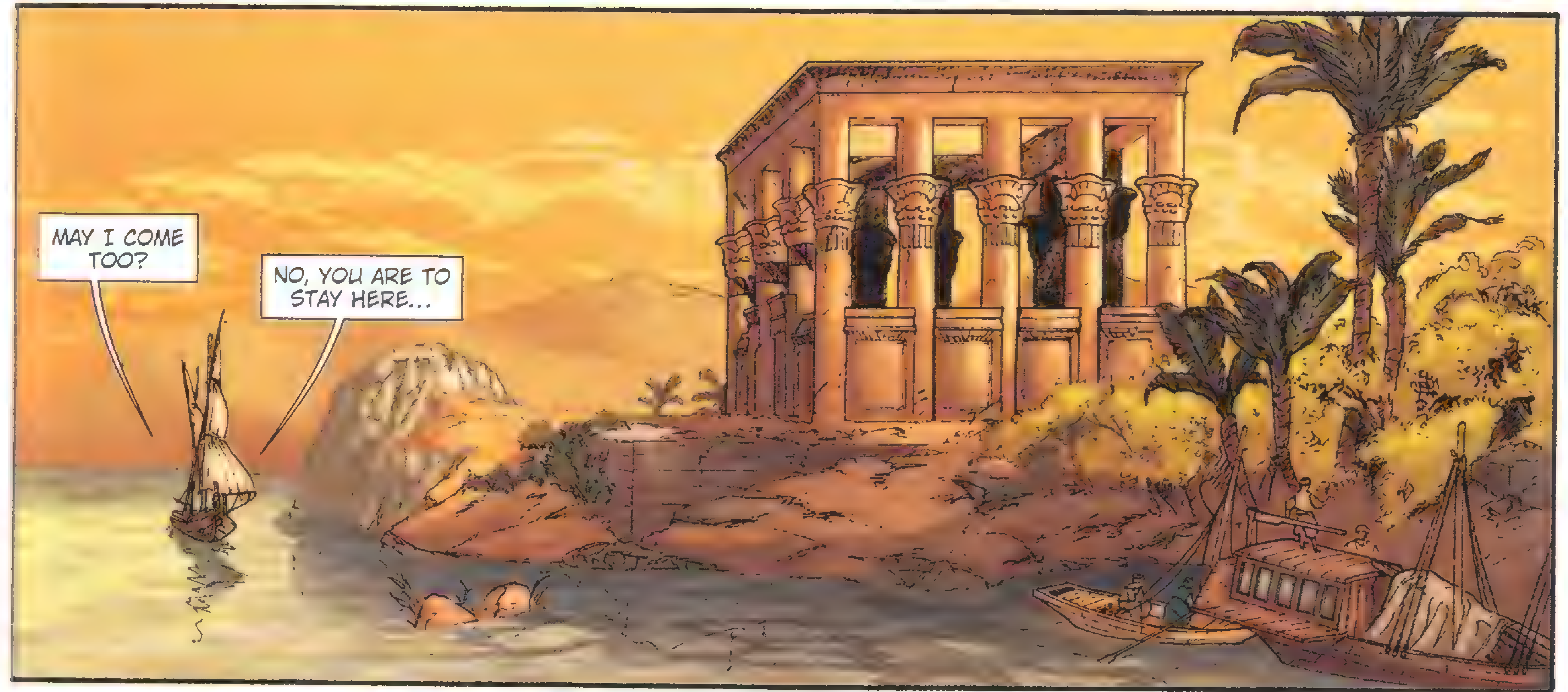
I DO NOT KNOW IF YOU ARE THE GREATEST EGYPTIAN ARTIST, ALI AL-GHRAIB, BUT YOU ARE CERTAINLY NOT LACKING IN NERVE OR IMAGINATION!



I KNOW. I AM AN INDISPENSABLE COMPANION!

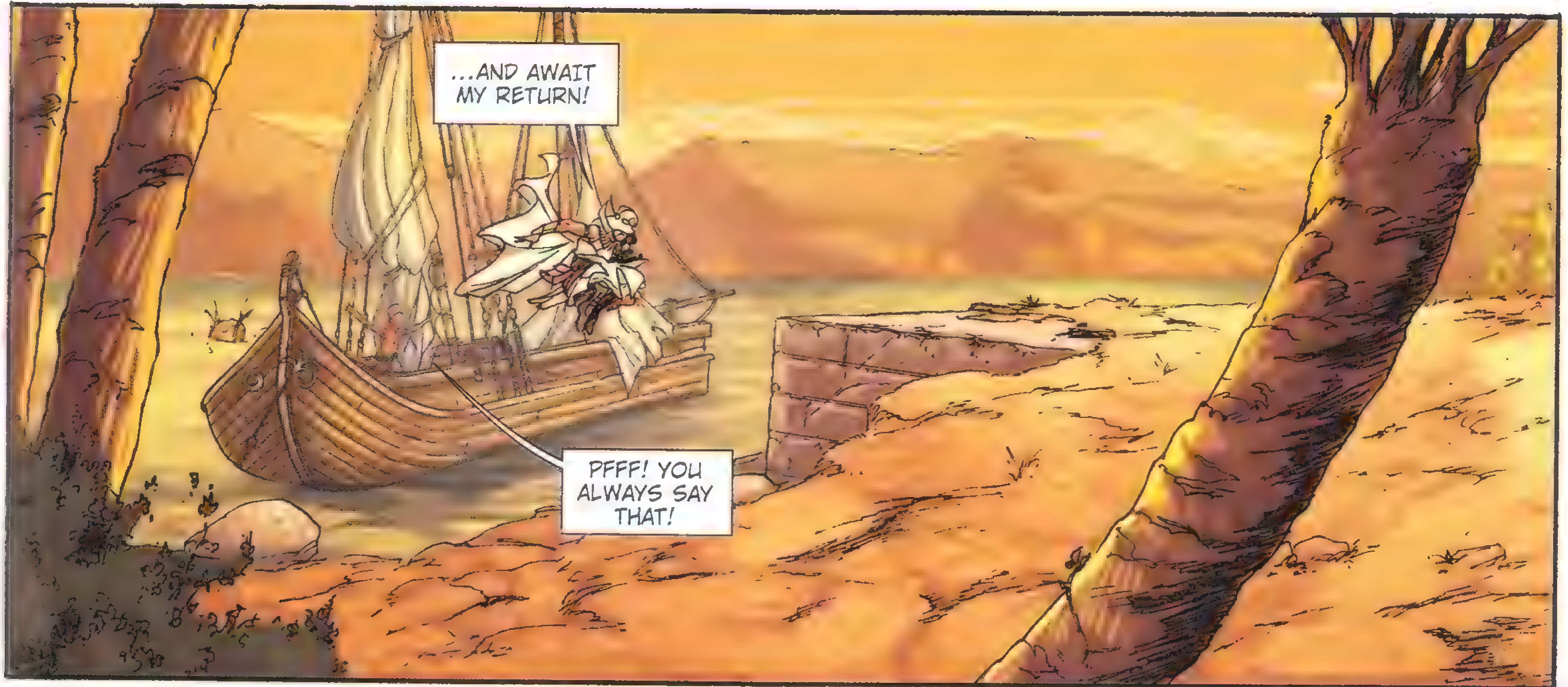


AHA! THE ISLE OF PHILAE. WE HAVE ARRIVED.



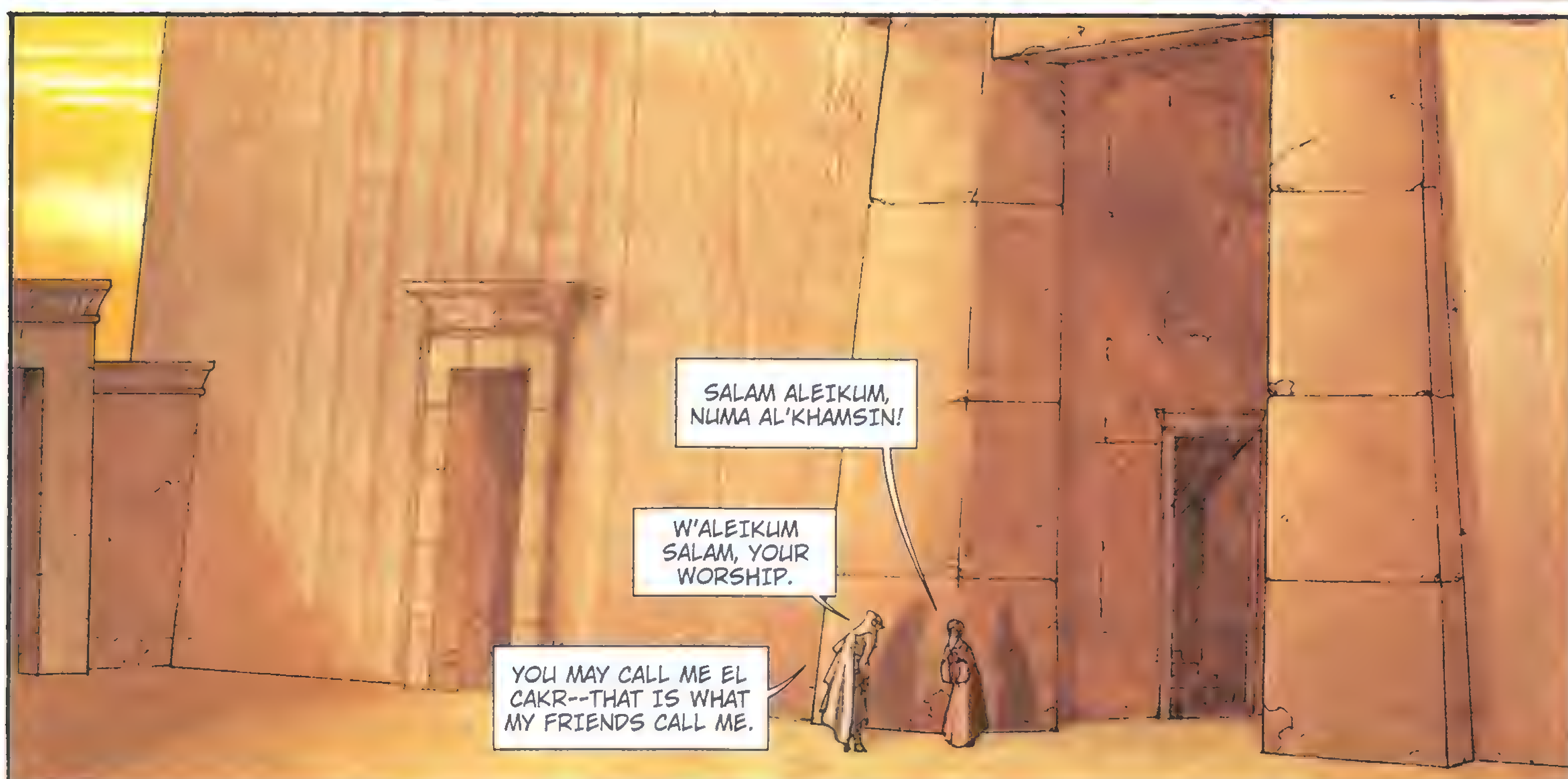
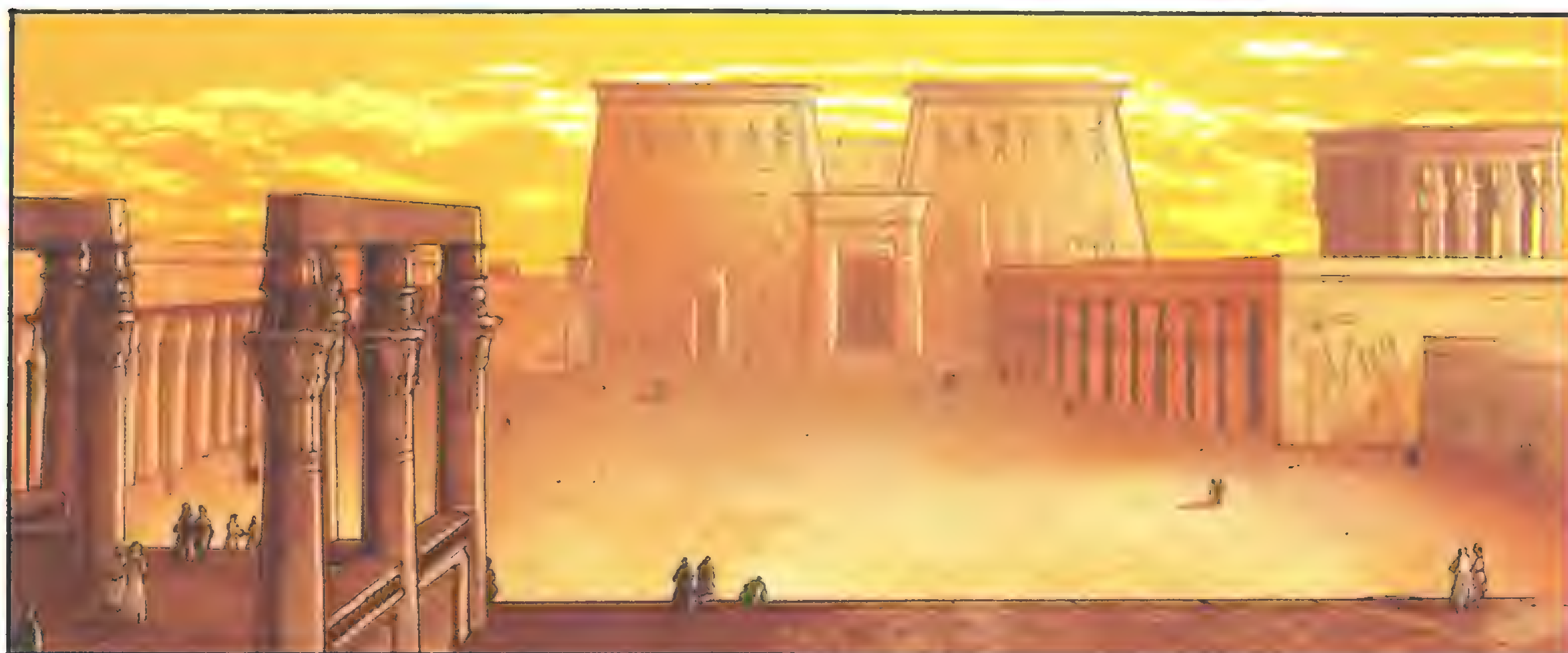
MAY I COME TOO?

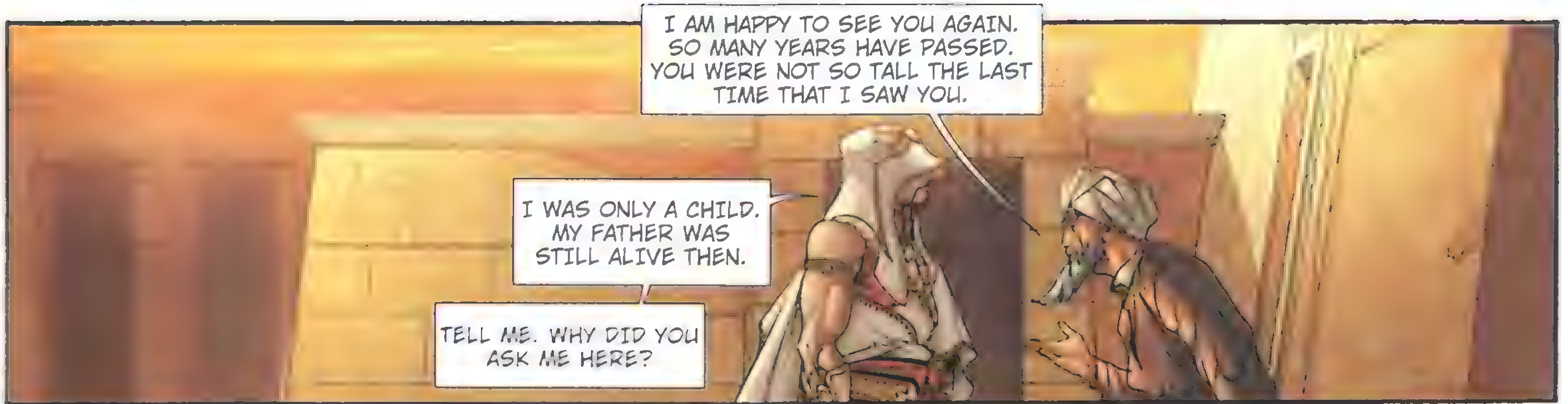
NO, YOU ARE TO STAY HERE...

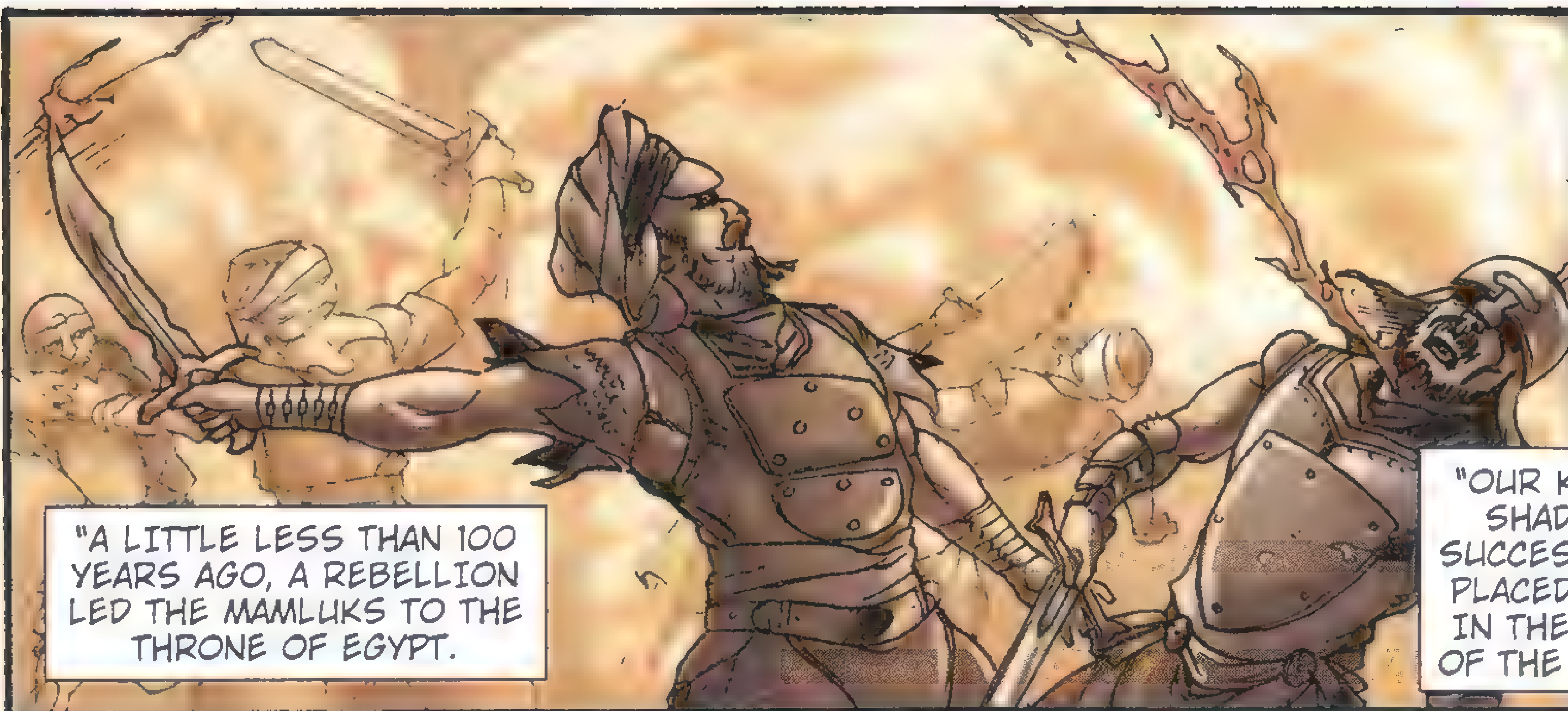


...AND AWAIT MY RETURN!

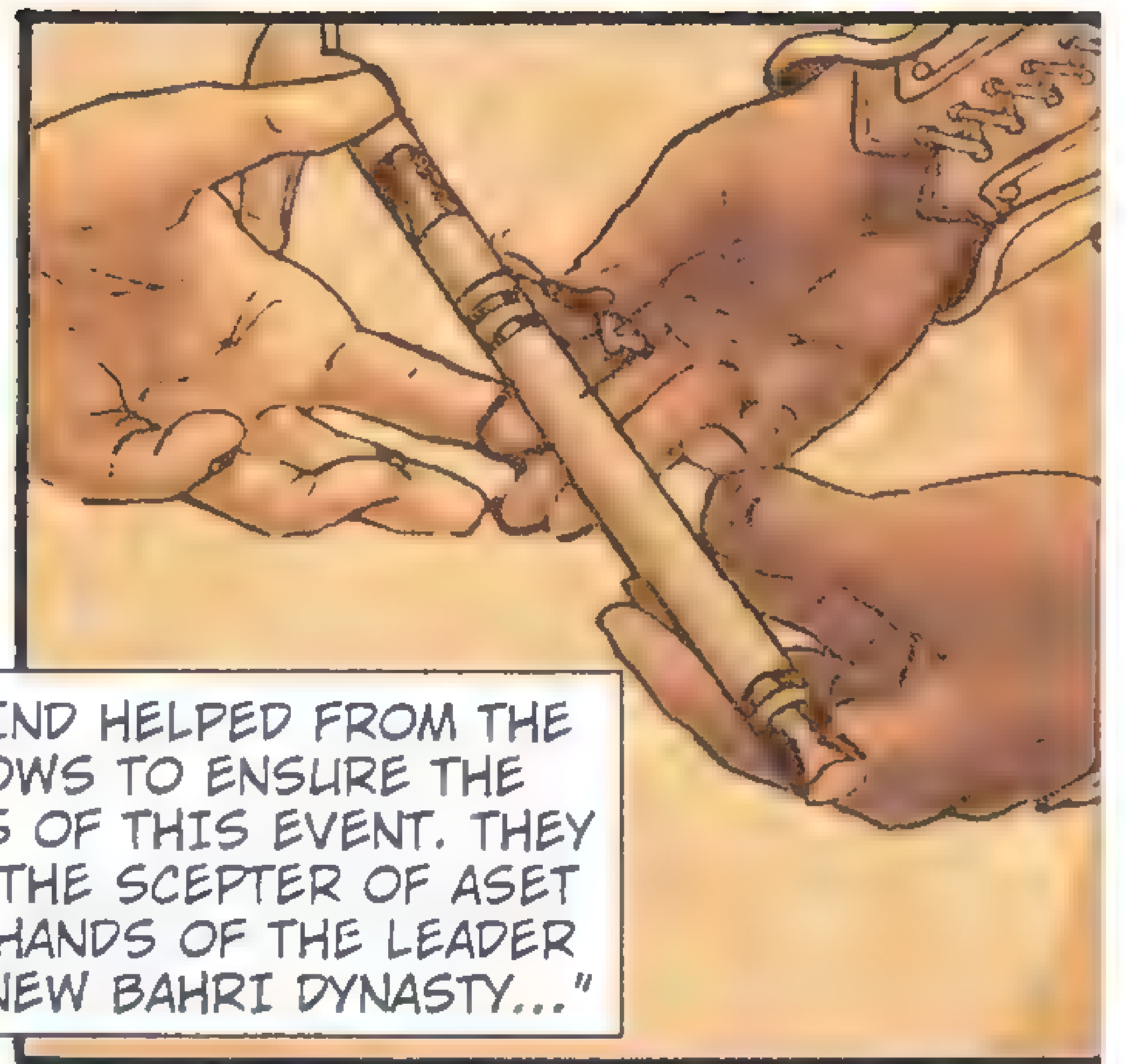
PFFF! YOU ALWAYS SAY THAT!







"A LITTLE LESS THAN 100 YEARS AGO, A REBELLION LED THE MAMLUKS TO THE THRONE OF EGYPT."



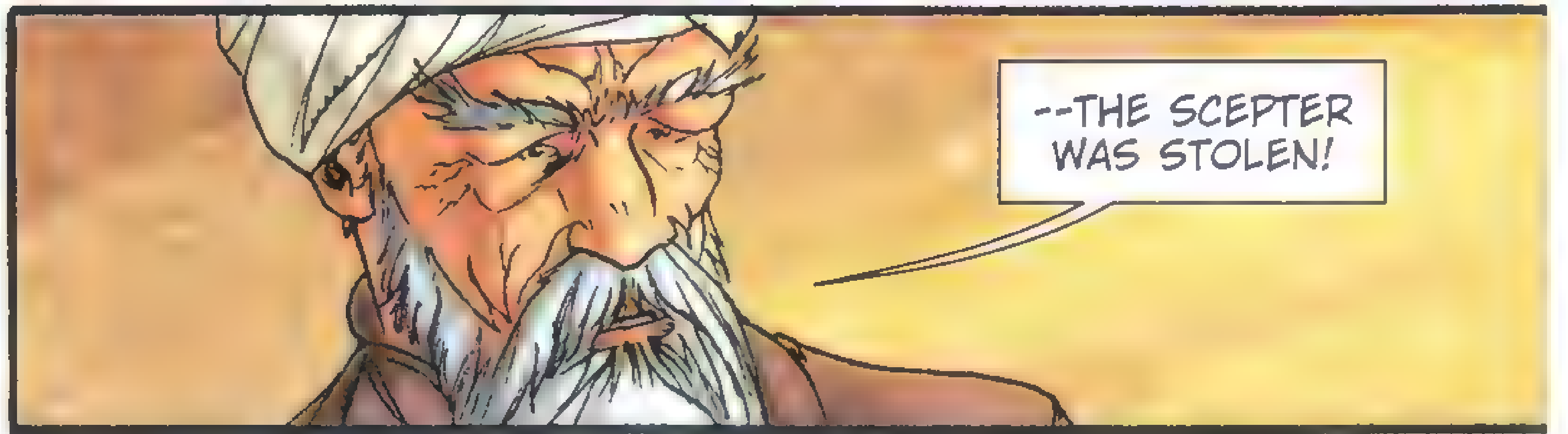
"OUR KIND HELPED FROM THE SHADOWS TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF THIS EVENT. THEY PLACED THE SCEPTER OF ASET IN THE HANDS OF THE LEADER OF THE NEW BAHRI DYNASTY..."



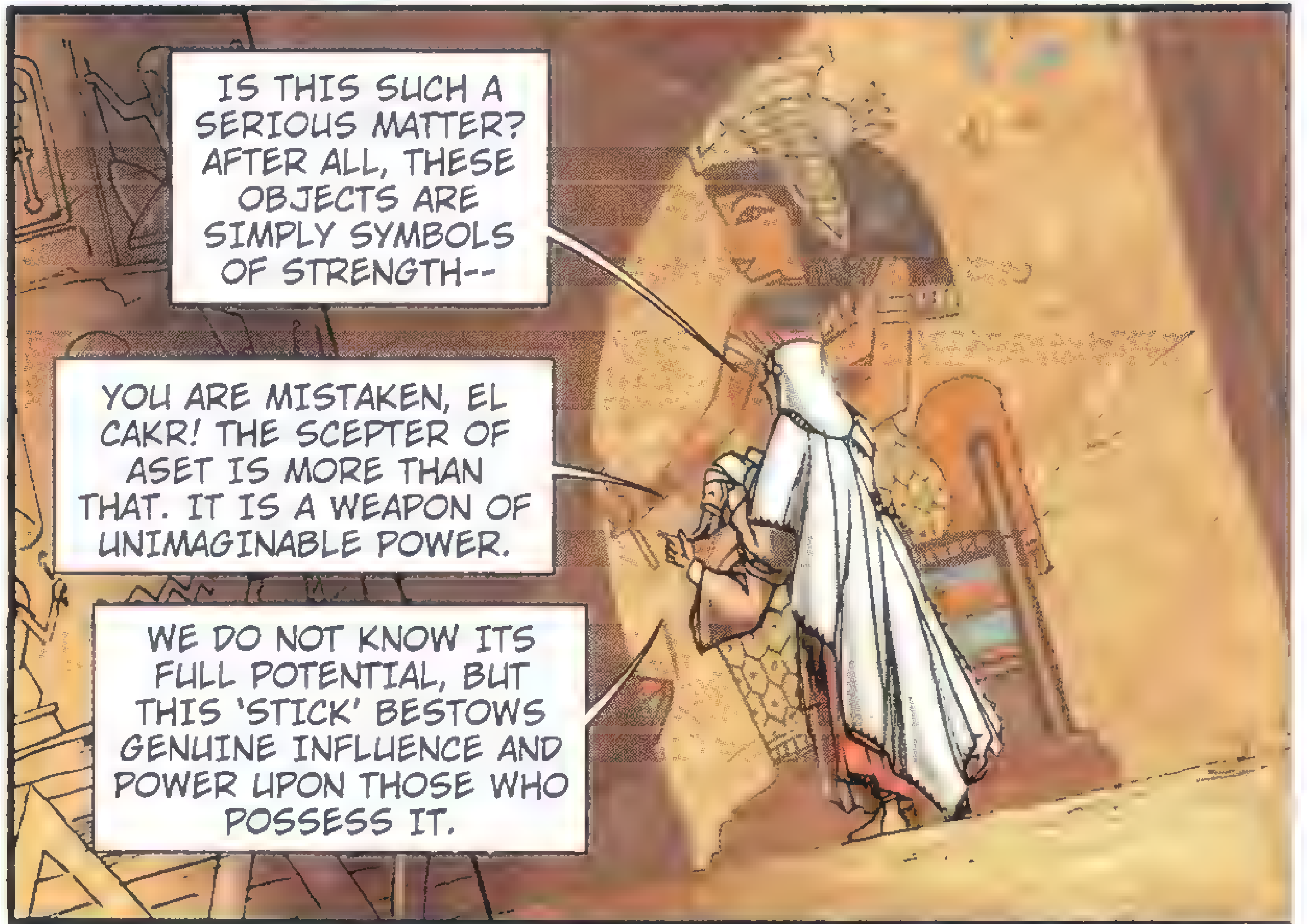
IN LESS THAN 100 YEARS, CAIRO BECAME A SPECTACULAR AND PROSPEROUS CAPITAL, AND THE COUNTRY ENJOYED A PERIOD OF PEACE AND STABILITY WITHOUT PRECEDENT.

SINCE 1209, THE SCEPTER HAS BEEN IN THE POSSESSION OF THE SULTAN, AN NASIR MUHAMMAD IBN QALAWUN.

BUT THERE WAS AN INCIDENT SOME DAYS AGO... AN EVENT WHICH THREATENS TO CAST A SHADOW OVER THE FUTURE OF EGYPT--



--THE SCEPTER WAS STOLEN!



IS THIS SUCH A SERIOUS MATTER? AFTER ALL, THESE OBJECTS ARE SIMPLY SYMBOLS OF STRENGTH--

YOU ARE MISTAKEN, EL CAKR! THE SCEPTER OF ASET IS MORE THAN THAT. IT IS A WEAPON OF UNIMAGINABLE POWER.

WE DO NOT KNOW ITS FULL POTENTIAL, BUT THIS 'STICK' BESTOWS GENUINE INFLUENCE AND POWER UPON THOSE WHO POSSESS IT.



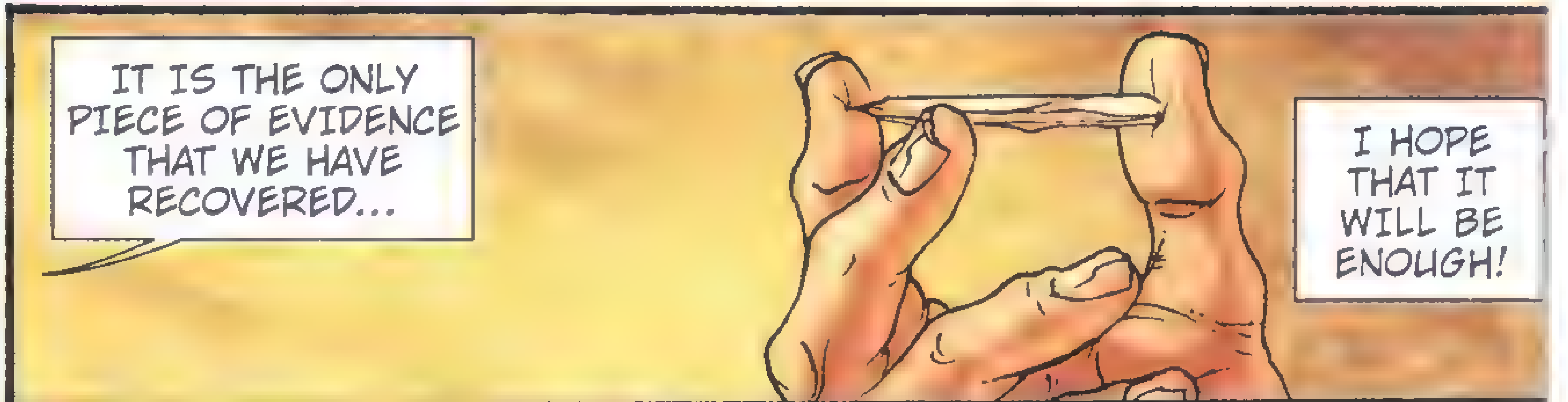
IT IS ABSOLUTELY IMPERATIVE WE GET OUR HANDS ON IT! THE BALANCE OF EGYPT IS AT STAKE!

BUT THE COUNTRY IS SO VAST!



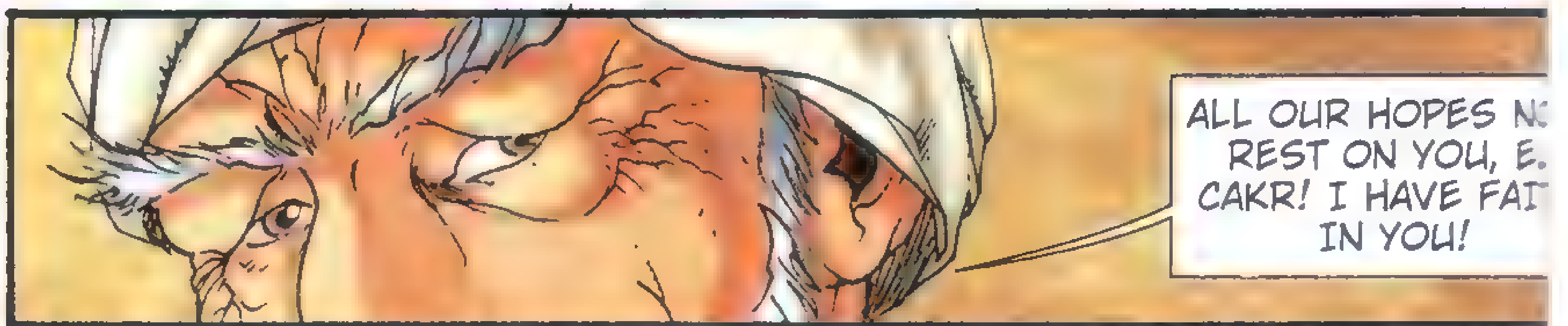
THIS IVORY SHARD IS FROM THE HANDLE OF A DAGGER.

THIS DAGGER HAD FALLEN TO THE FLOOR WHEN THE SULTAN'S GUARDS ATTEMPTED TO DEFEND THEIR MASTER, AND THE HANDLE CHIPPED.

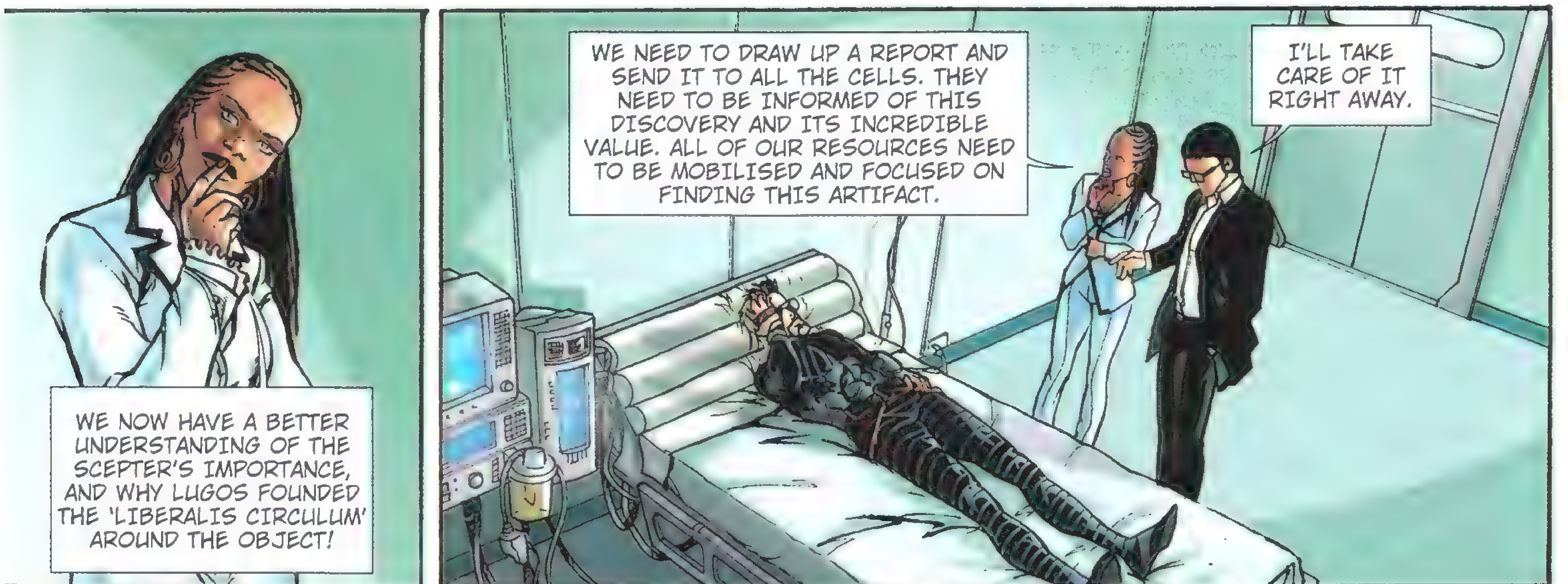
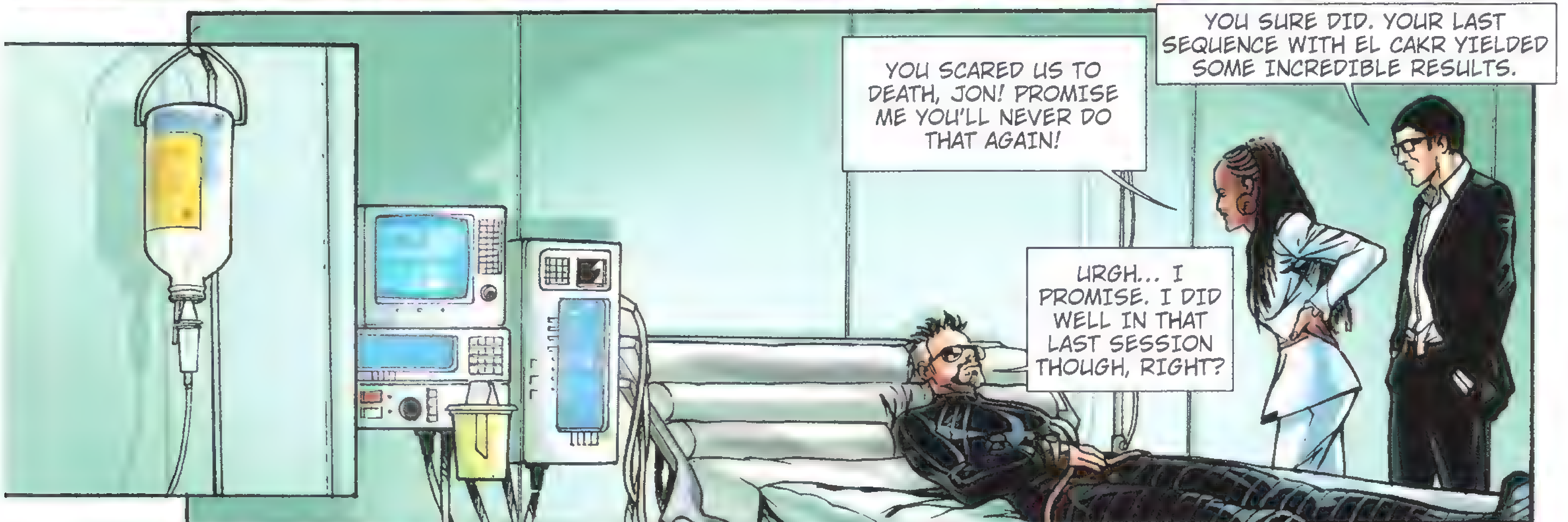
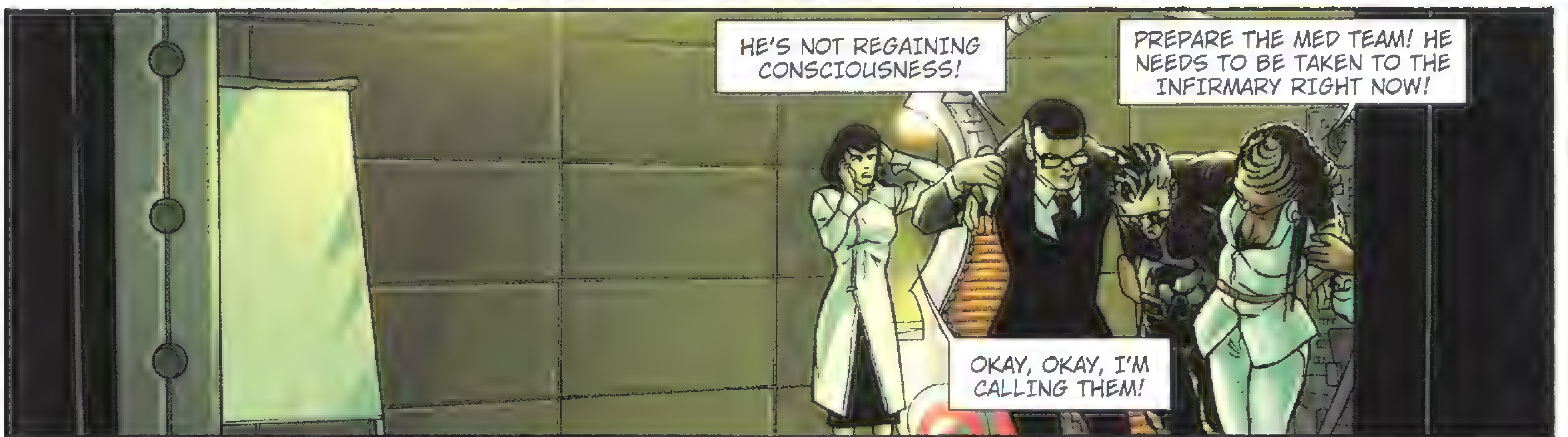
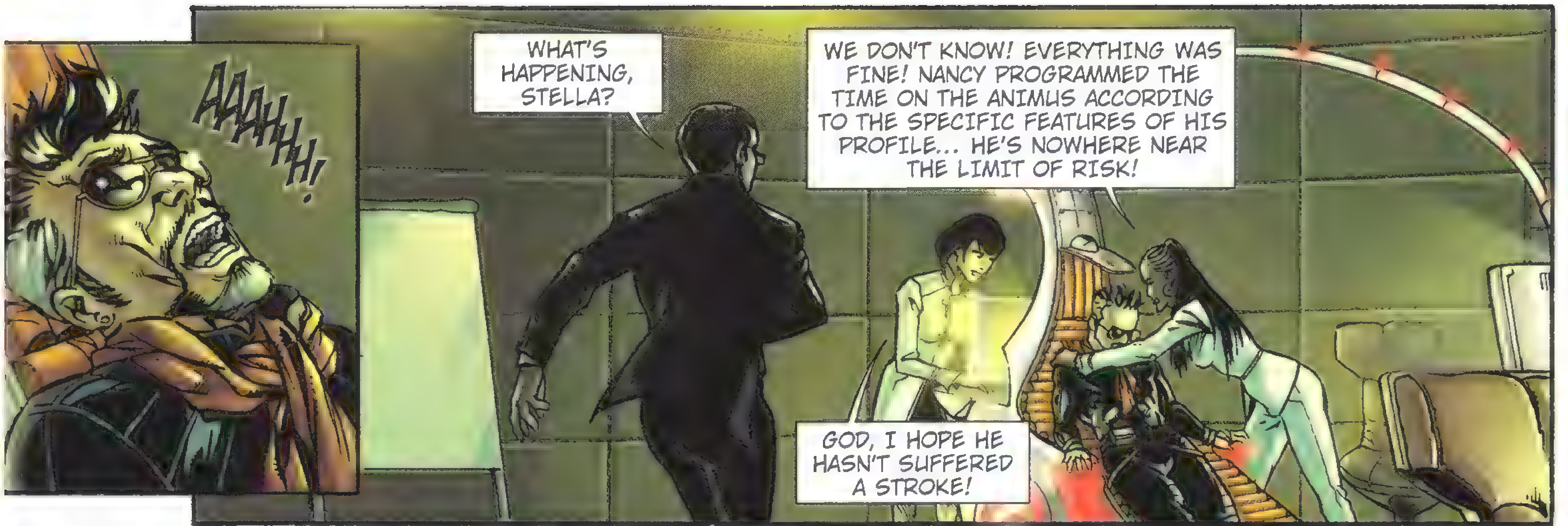


IT IS THE ONLY PIECE OF EVIDENCE THAT WE HAVE RECOVERED...

I HOPE THAT IT WILL BE ENOUGH!



ALL OUR HOPES NOW REST ON YOU, E. CAKR! I HAVE FAITH IN YOU!





NEW YORK. TWO DAYS LATER.

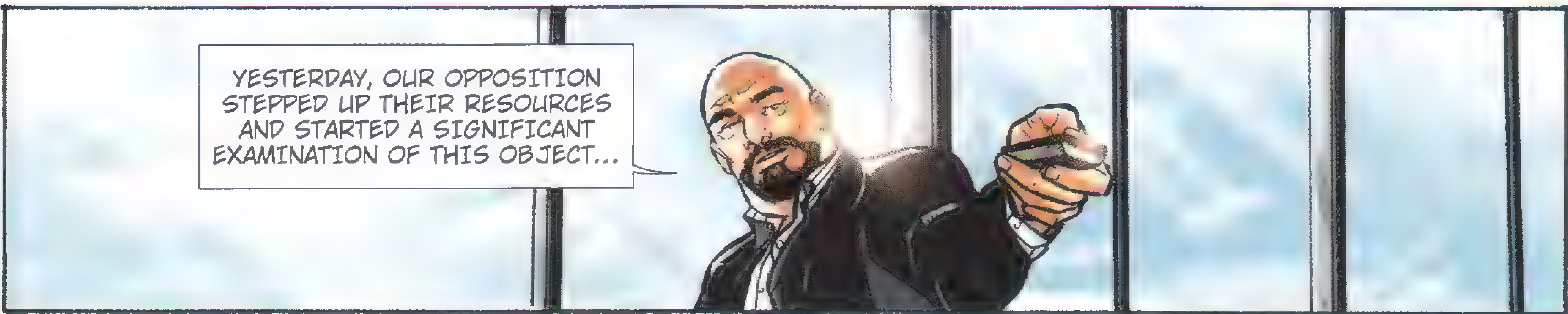
"I'VE TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF ASKING YOU BOTH HERE LIKE THIS BECAUSE I'D LIKE TO PICK YOUR BRAINS ABOUT SOMETHING."



WHAT IS IT?

A MESSAGE...

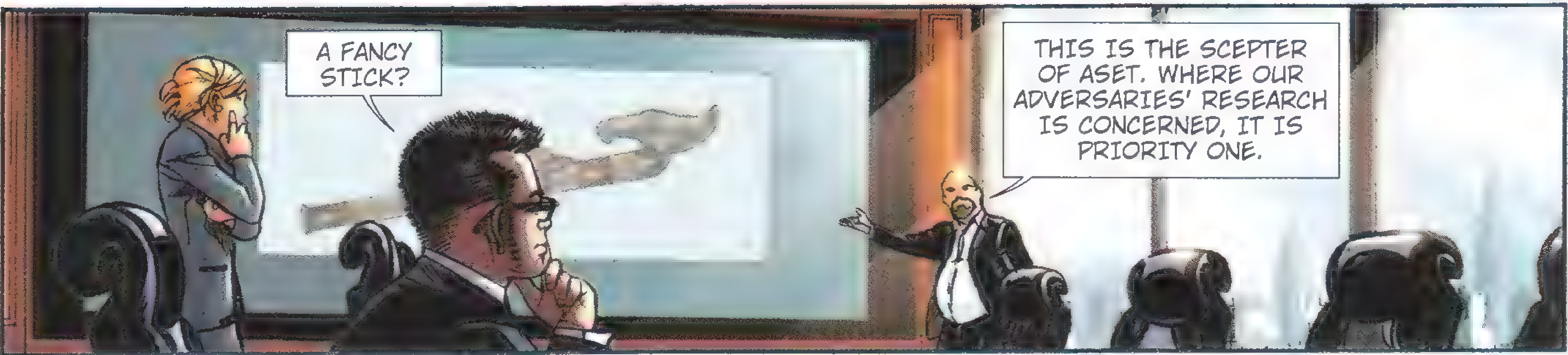
...SENT TO ME BY ONE OF OUR MOLES.



YESTERDAY, OUR OPPOSITION STEPPED UP THEIR RESOURCES AND STARTED A SIGNIFICANT EXAMINATION OF THIS OBJECT...

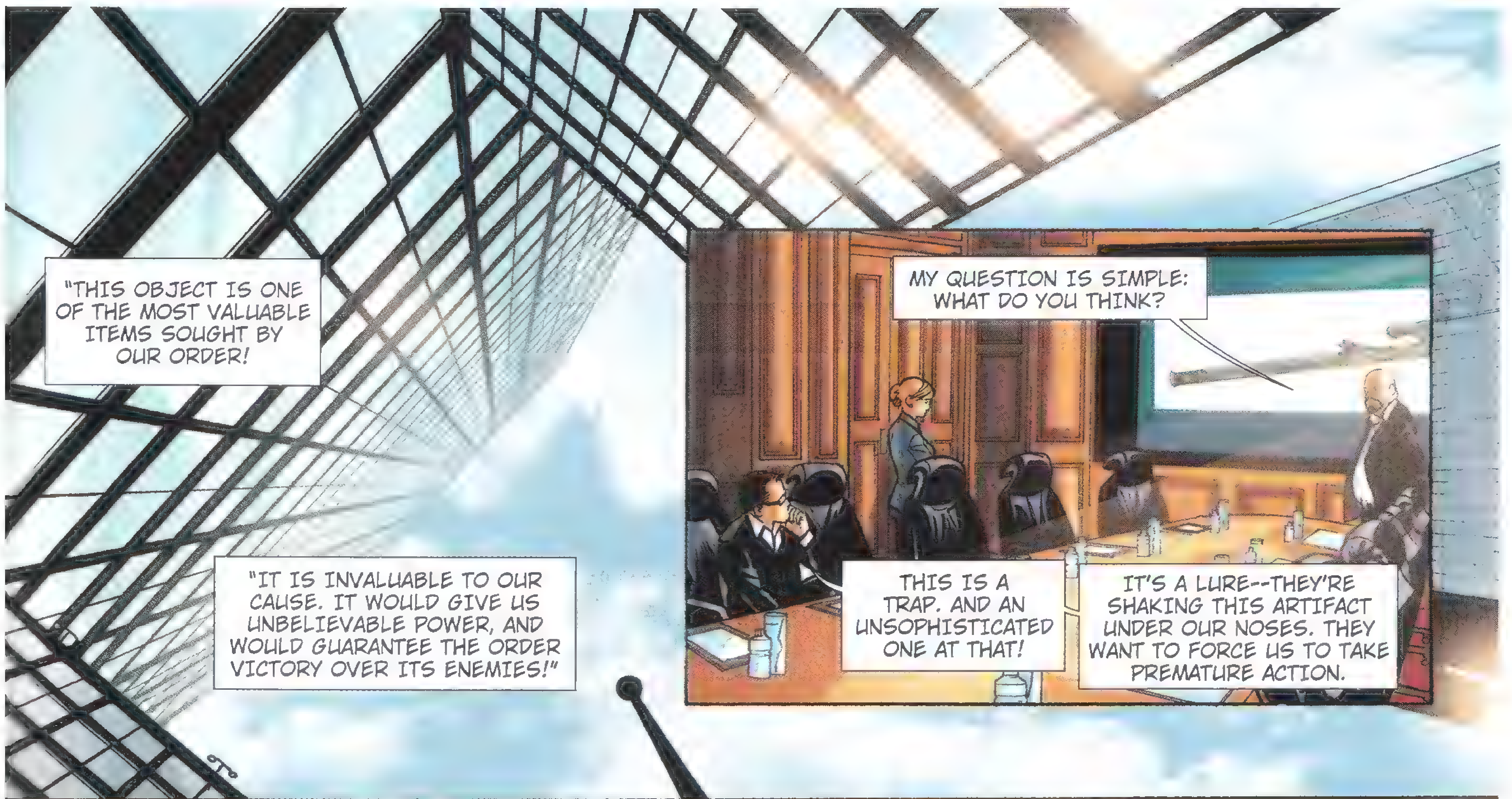


...HERE.



A FANCY STICK?

THIS IS THE SCEPTER OF ASET. WHERE OUR ADVERSARIES' RESEARCH IS CONCERNED, IT IS PRIORITY ONE.



"THIS OBJECT IS ONE OF THE MOST VALUABLE ITEMS SOUGHT BY OUR ORDER!"

"IT IS INVALUABLE TO OUR CAUSE. IT WOULD GIVE US UNBELIEVABLE POWER, AND WOULD GUARANTEE THE ORDER VICTORY OVER ITS ENEMIES!"

MY QUESTION IS SIMPLE: WHAT DO YOU THINK?

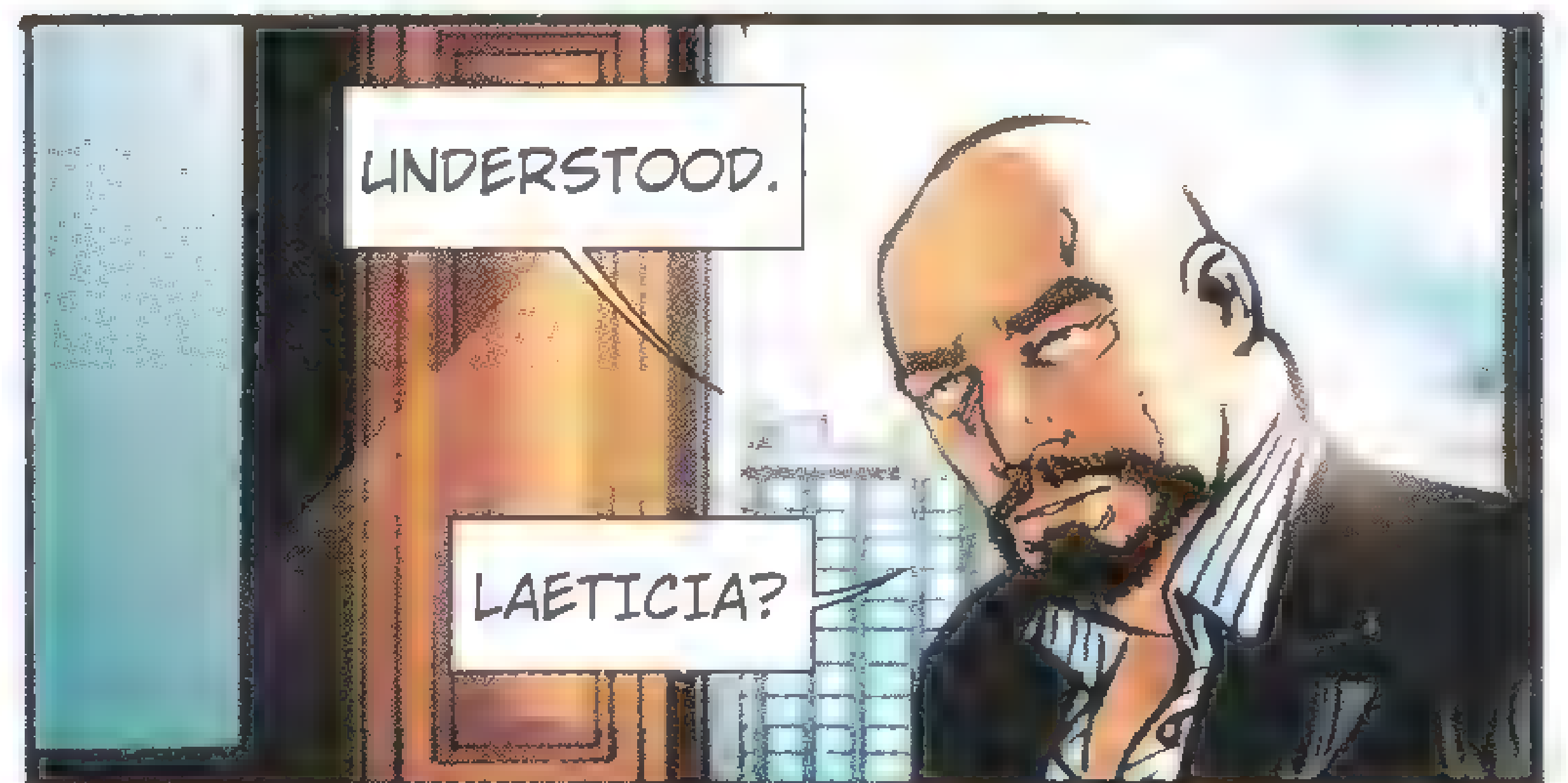
THIS IS A TRAP. AND AN UNSOPHISTICATED ONE AT THAT!

IT'S A LURE--THEY'RE SHAKING THIS ARTIFACT UNDER OUR NOSES. THEY WANT TO FORCE US TO TAKE PREMATURE ACTION.



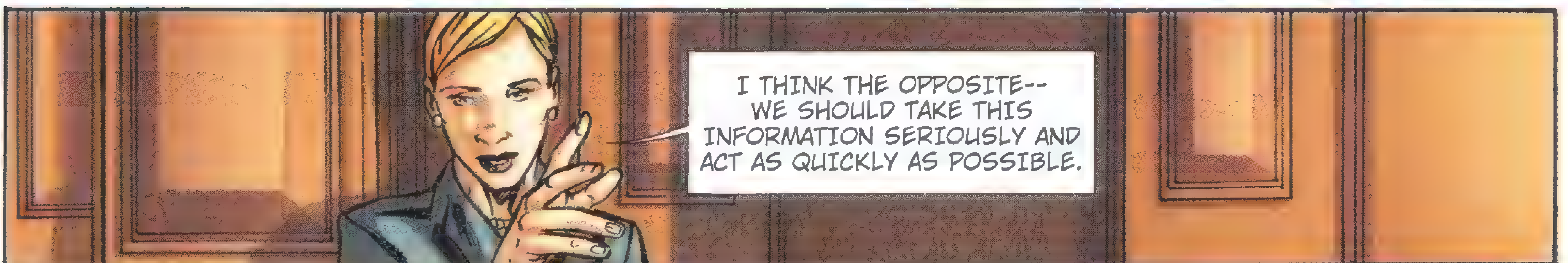
IF WE REACT, WE'LL GET FOUND OUT. AND OUR AGENTS' COVERS WILL BE **BLOWN** ALONG THE WAY!

ALL I'M SAYING IS, WE NEED TO BE **EXTREMELY** CAREFUL.



UNDERSTOOD.

LAETICIA?



I THINK THE OPPOSITE-- WE SHOULD TAKE THIS INFORMATION SERIOUSLY AND ACT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.



"IF THE CAPABILITIES OF THIS SCEPTER PROVE TO BE REAL, IT COULD SIGNIFICANTLY REINFORCE THE INFLUENCE OF OUR ORDER ON THE EAST."



THANK YOU BOTH. I WILL TAKE YOUR COMMENTS ON BOARD...

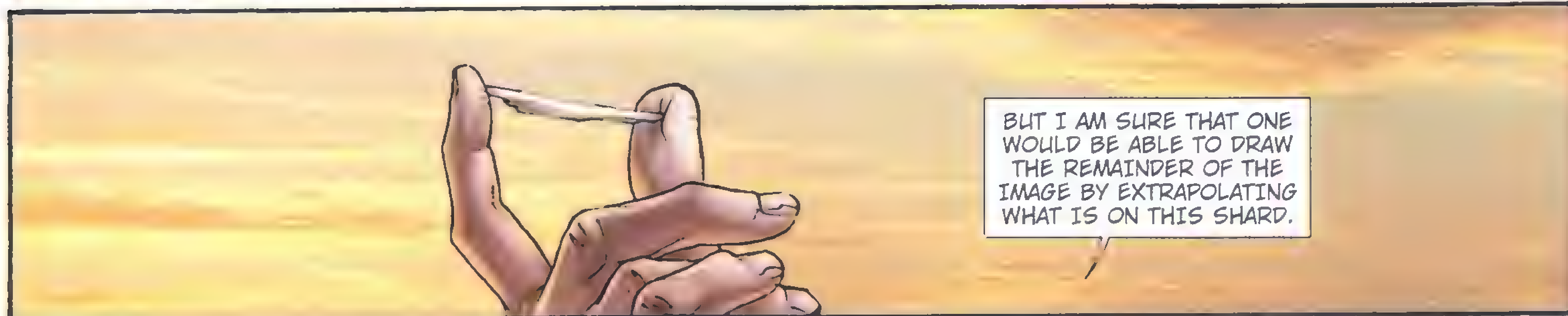
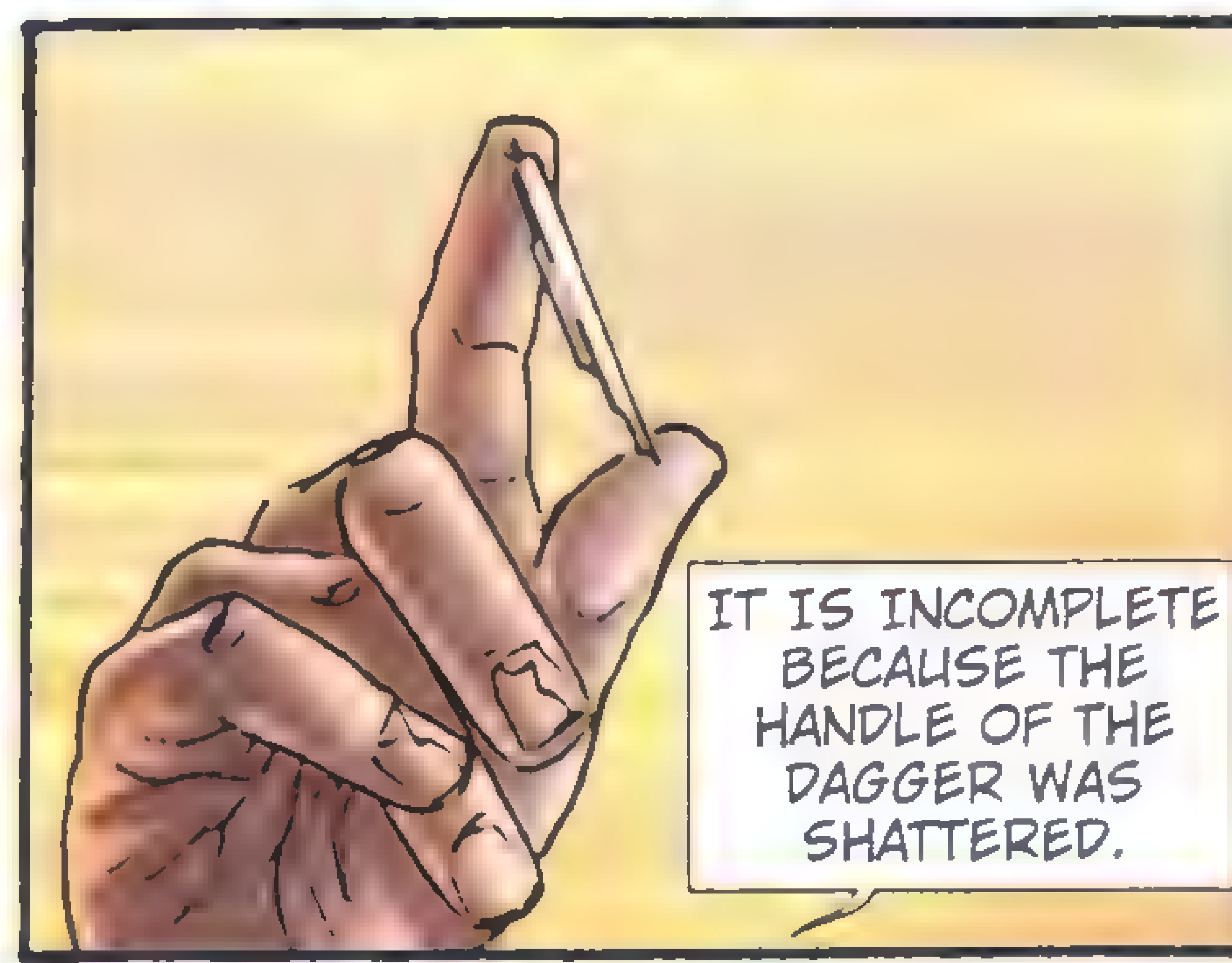
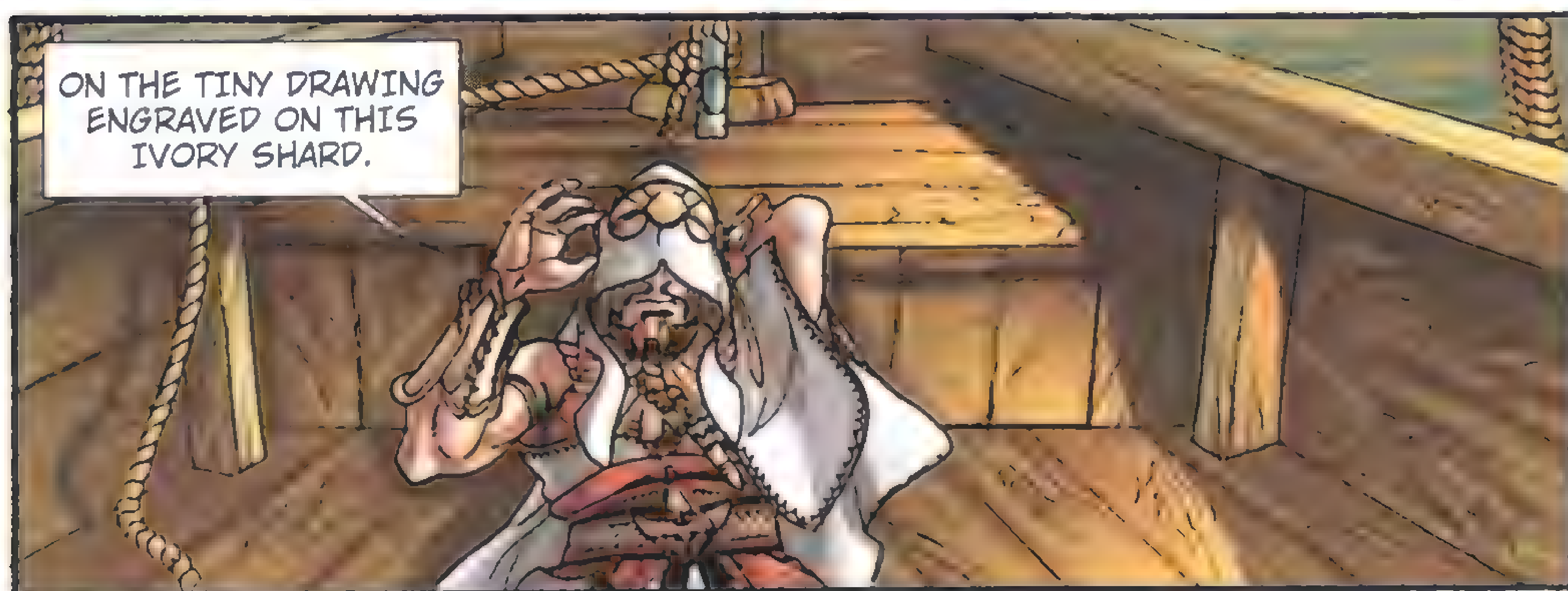
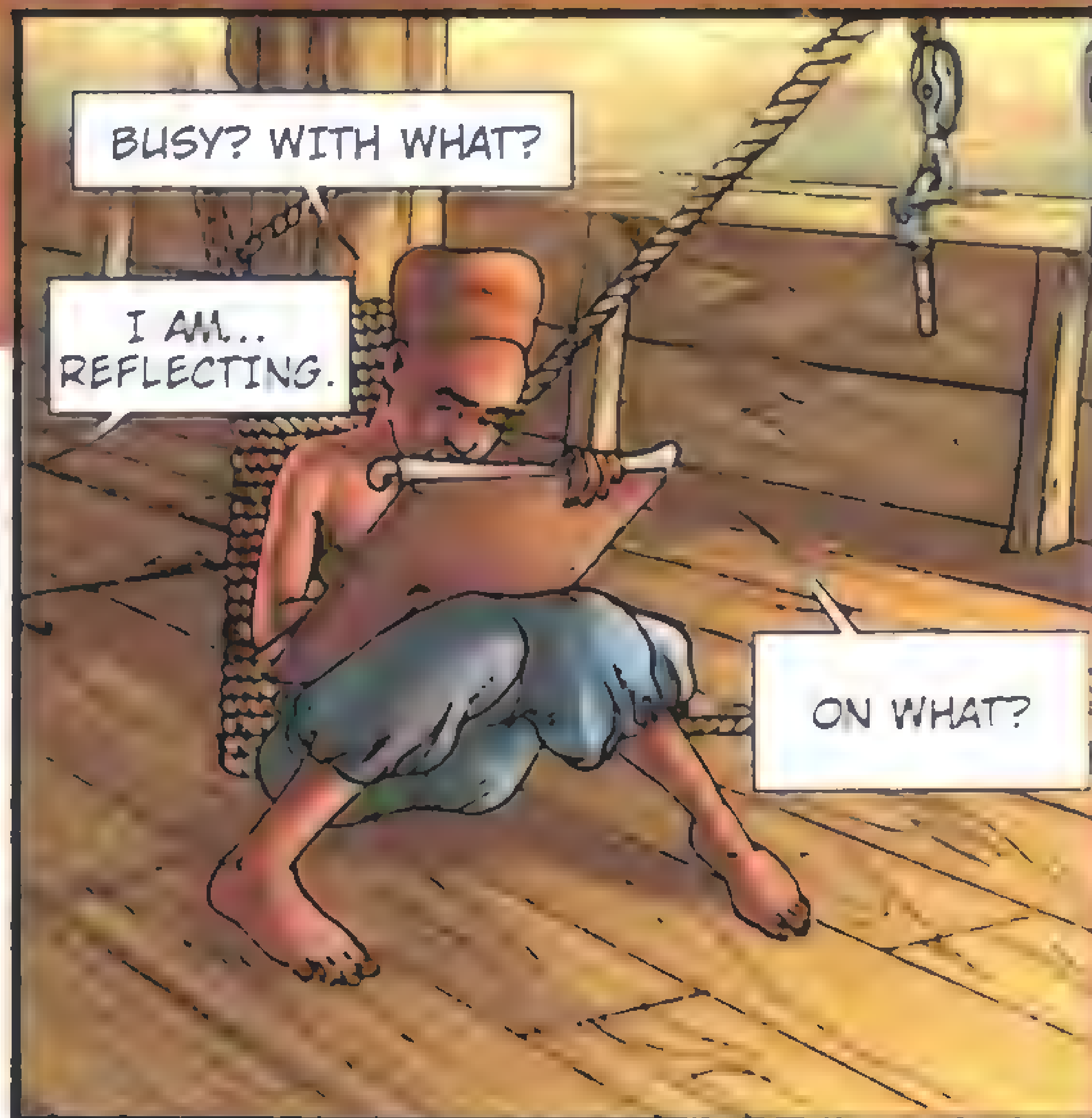
I'M GOING TO PLACE ONE OF OUR MOST CAREFUL AND EFFECTIVE FIELD AGENTS IN THIS MISSION.

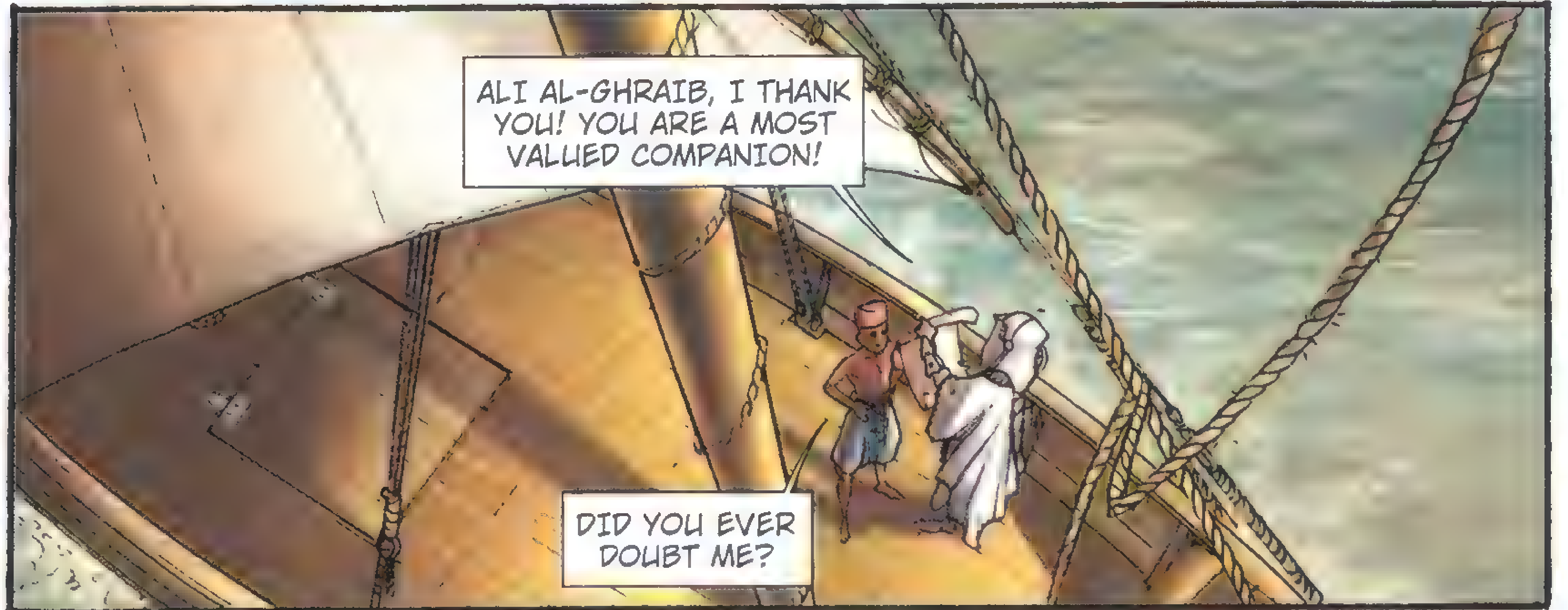
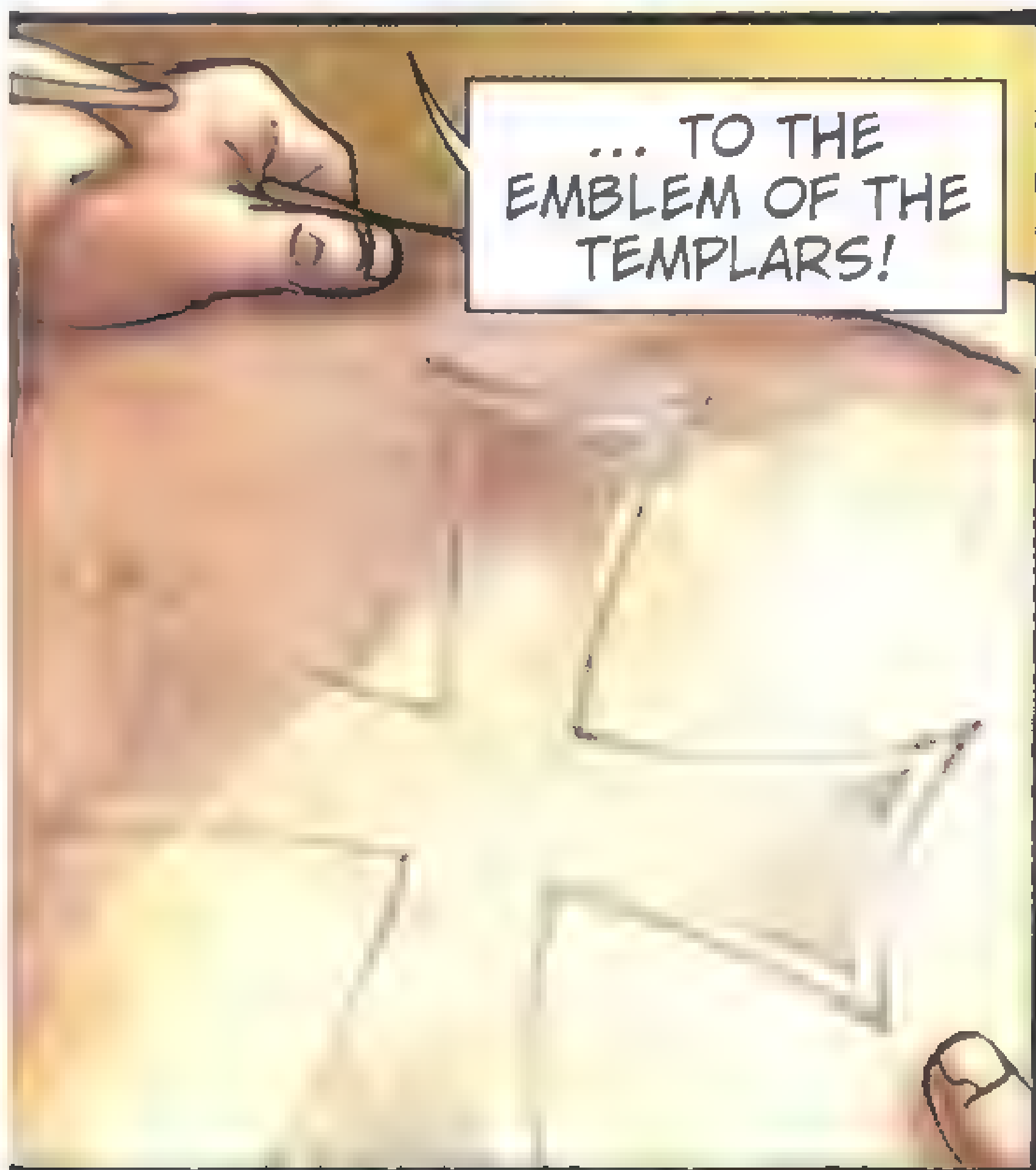
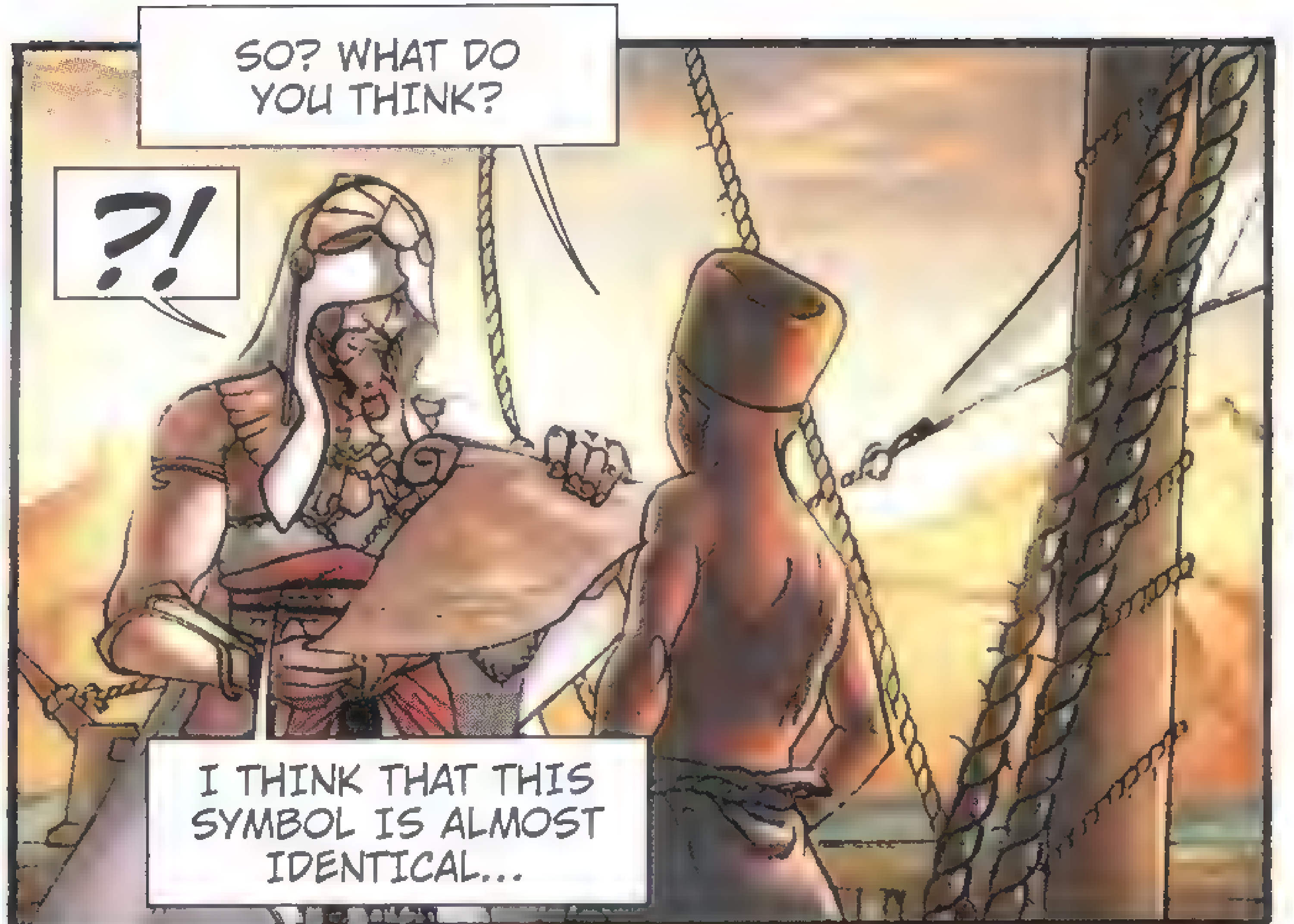


"LAETICIA, I'D LIKE YOU TO MAKE CONTACT WITH VERNON HEST TODAY."

"UNDERSTOOD, MR. RIKKIN."

EGYPT. 1340.





CAIRO. TWO
DAYS LATER.

IF THE TEMPLARS HAVE
TAKEN POSSESSION OF
THE SPECTRE, THEN THEY
MUST MEAN TO USE IT.

YOUR LOGIC IS
UNRELENTING, ALI.
YOU WOULD HAVE
MADE A GREAT
MATHEMATICIAN!

THOUGH I MUST SAY,
YOUR VOCABULARY
LEAVES A LITTLE TO
BE DESIRED. IT IS
NOT A SPECTRE, BUT
A *SCEPTER*.

THANK THE GODS! I HATE
GENIES AND I WASN'T
TOO FOND OF THE IDEA
OF RUNNING AFTER A
SPECTRE, EITHER!



AROUND THIS SIZE.

EL CAKR, HOW BIG IS THIS SCEPTER, INCIDENTALLY?



AND HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN CAIRO?

I DO NOT KNOW. I WOULD SAY ABOUT TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND... WHY THE INTERROGATION, ALI?



SO WE ARE LOOKING FOR A TINY OBJECT AMONGST ALL THESE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE? IT WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND!

REST ASSURED, ALI, I DO NOT INTEND TO KNOCK DOOR TO DOOR. AND WHO IS TO SAY IT IS HIDDEN IN CAIRO? THERE IS NO GUARANTEE.



WHAT? SO WHY ARE WE HERE?

BECAUSE HERE, ALI, THOUGH THE HOUSES ARE VERY BEAUTIFUL...

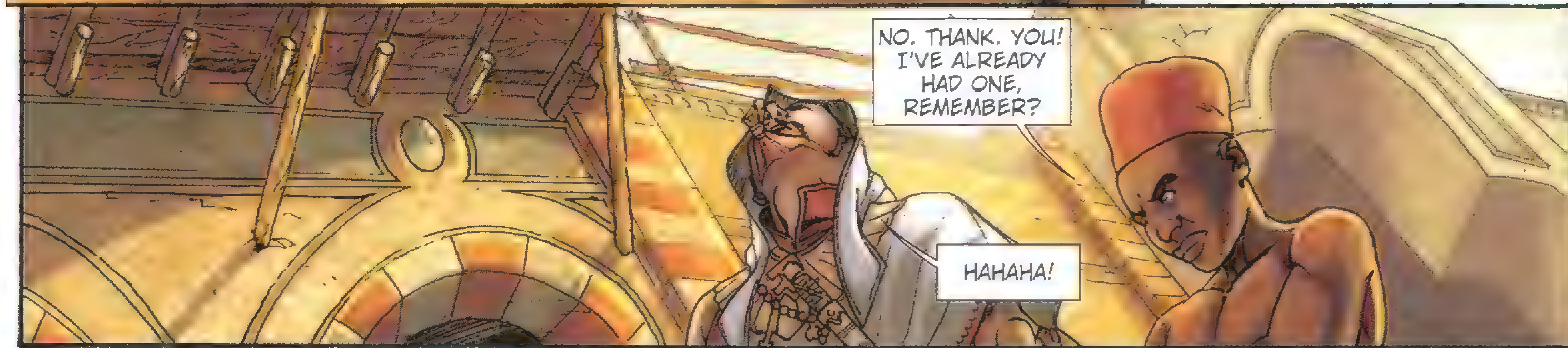


THEIR WALLS HAVE EARS!



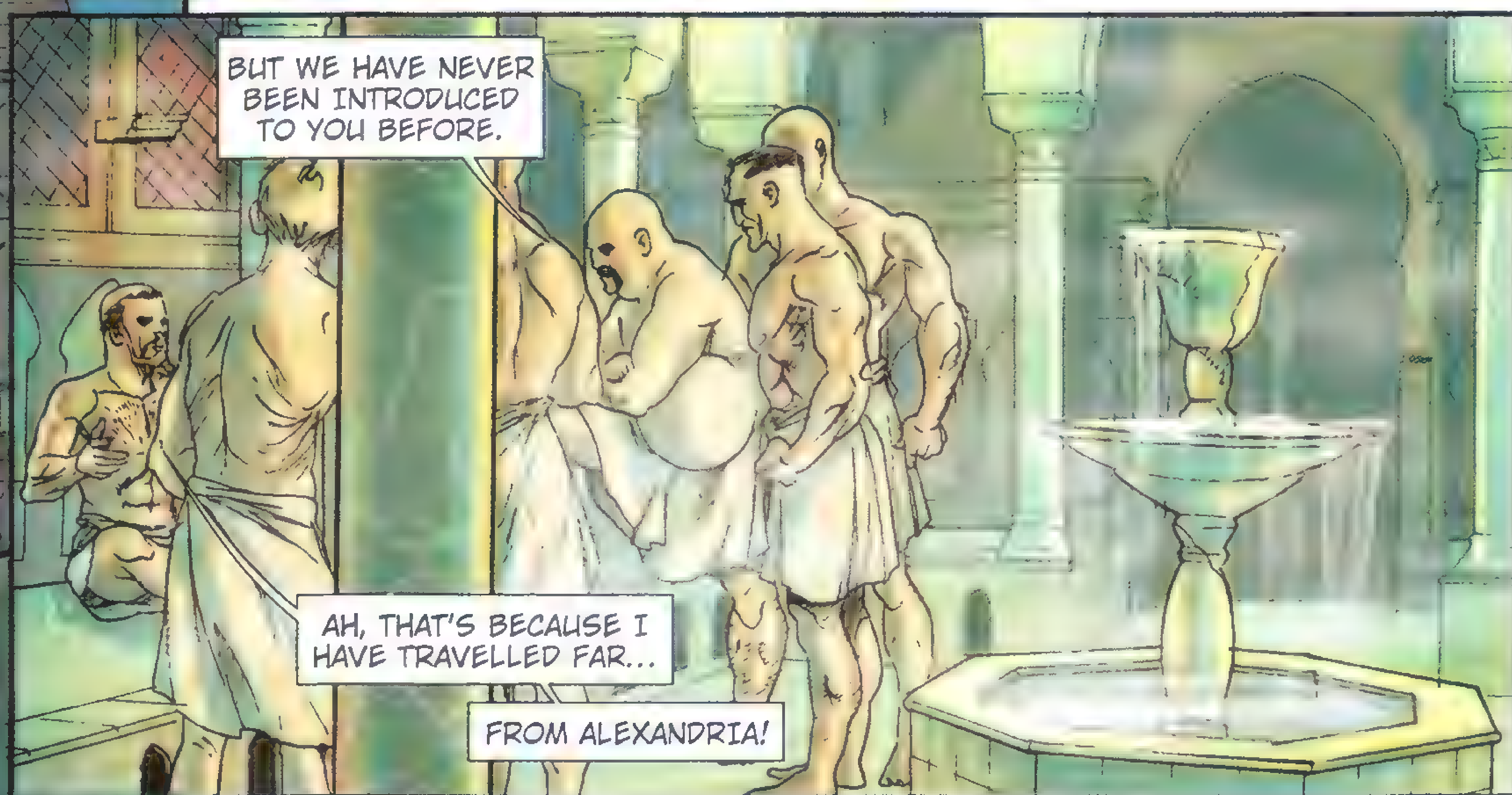
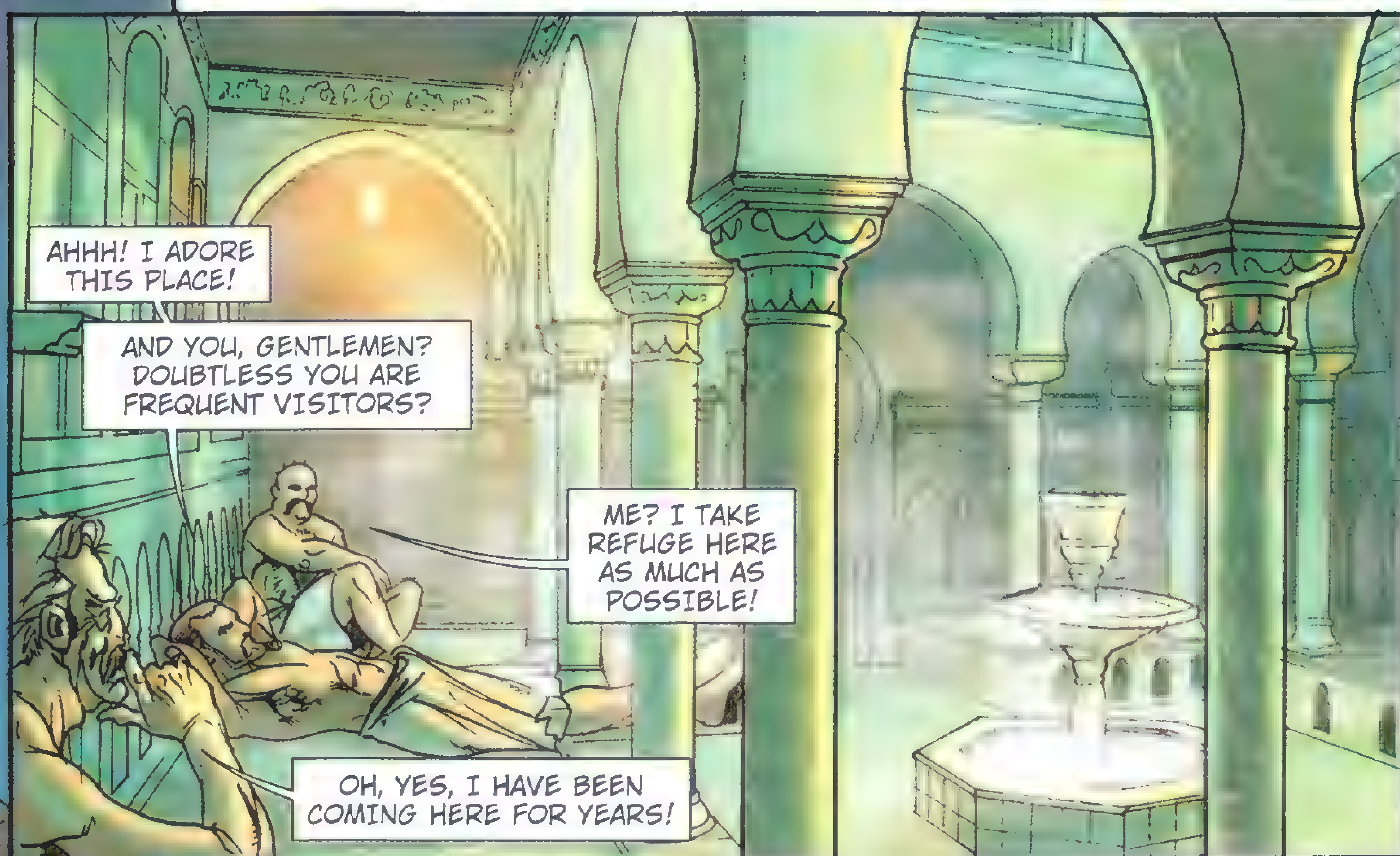
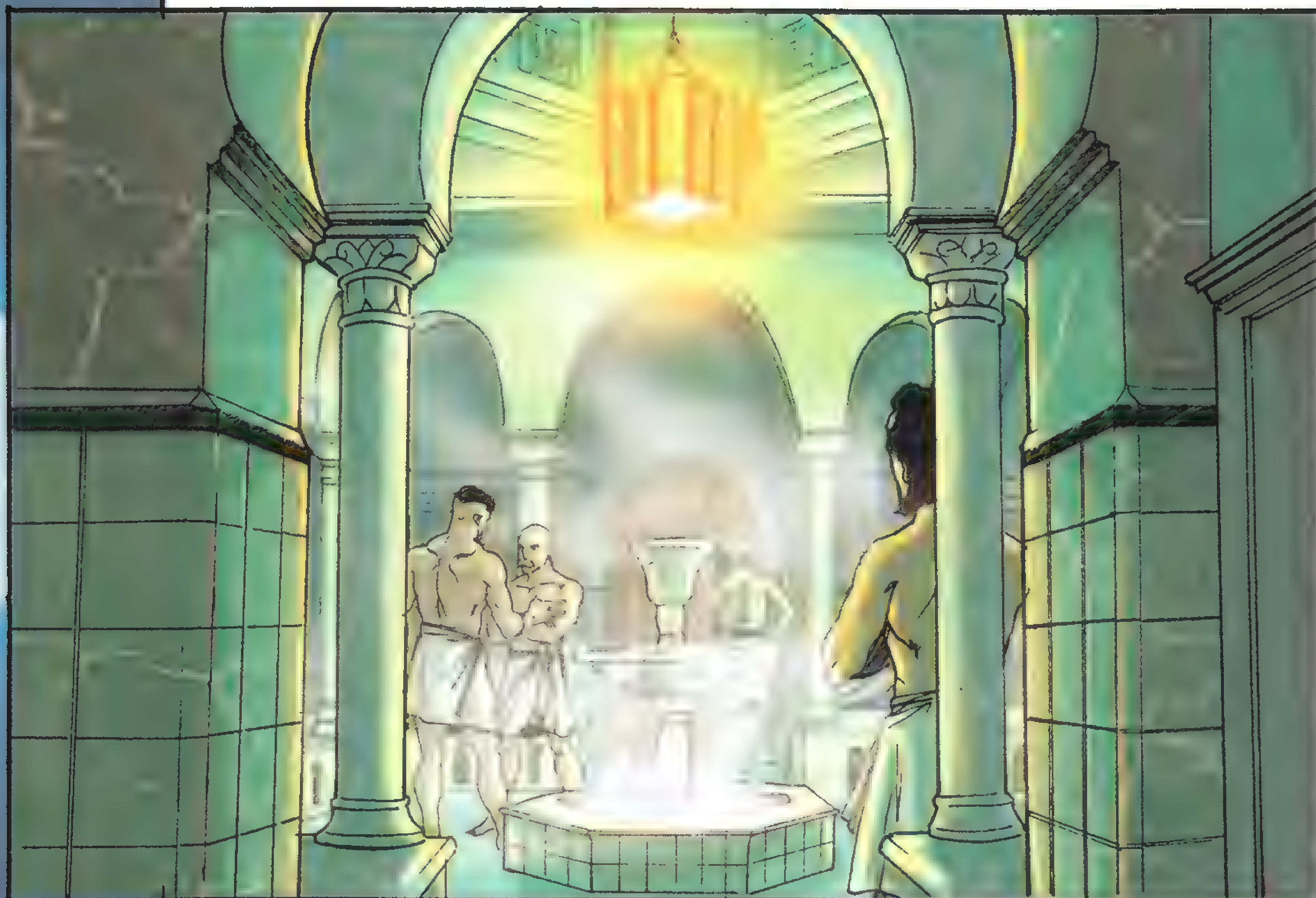
WHAT WILL YOU DO? HAVE YOU A PLAN?

HMMM. I THINK I WILL START BY TAKING A BATH. WILL YOU BE JOINING ME?

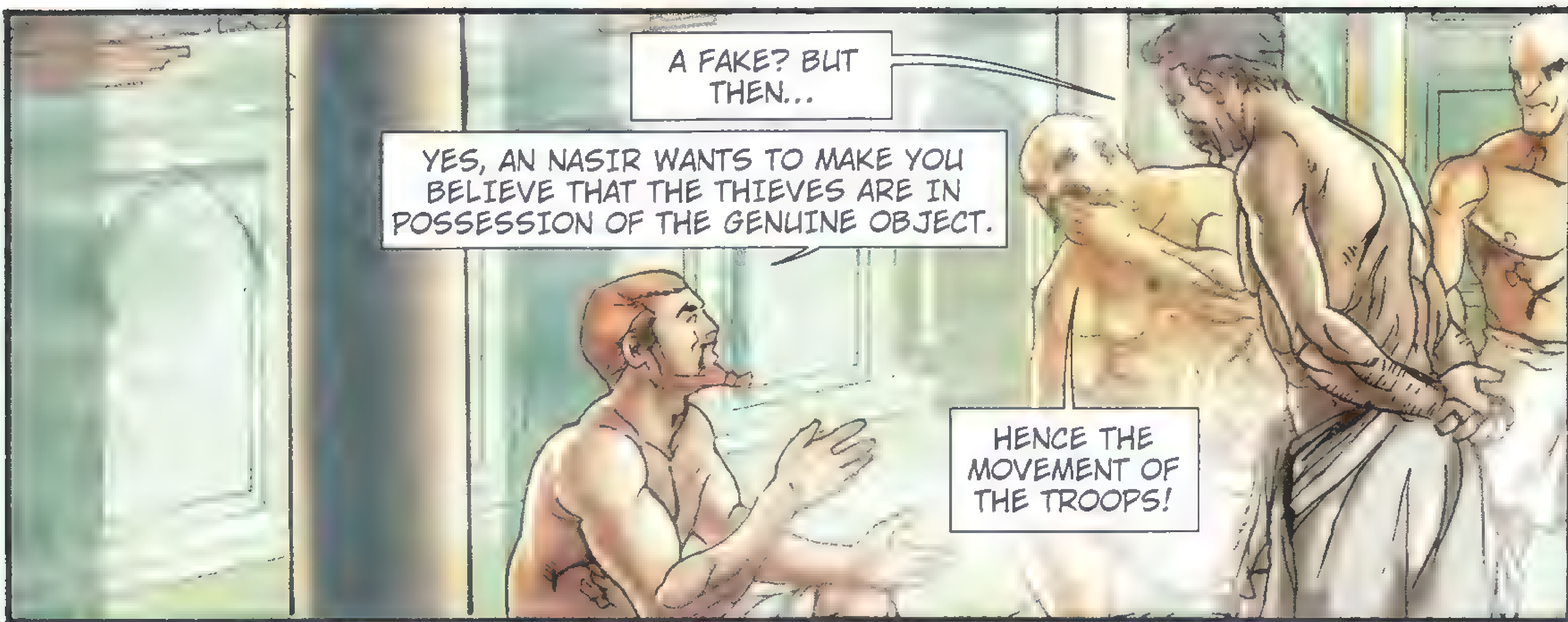


NO. THANK. YOU! I'VE ALREADY HAD ONE, REMEMBER?

HAHAHA!







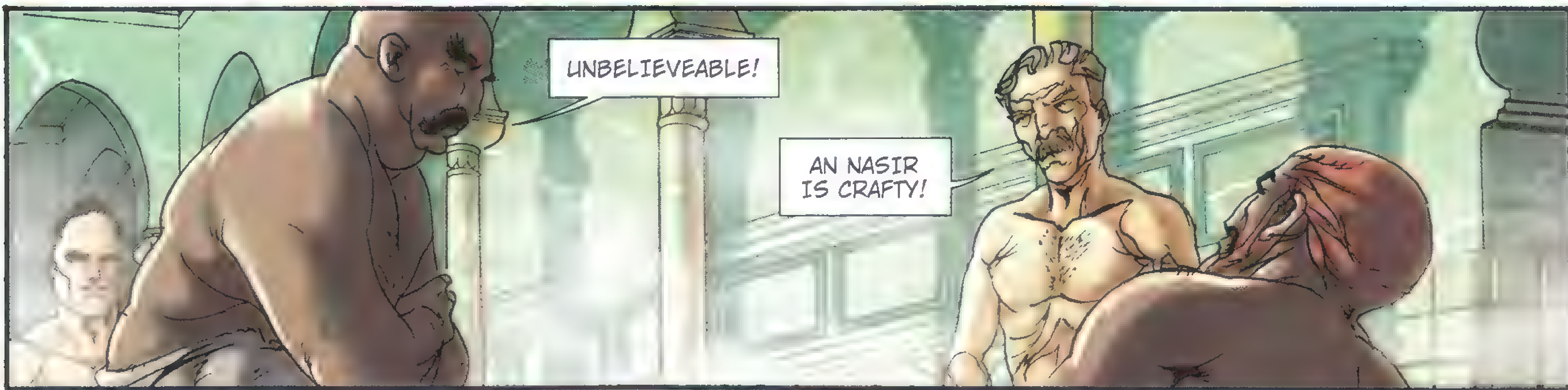
A FAKE? BUT THEN...

YES, AN NASIR WANTS TO MAKE YOU BELIEVE THAT THE THIEVES ARE IN POSSESSION OF THE GENUINE OBJECT.

HENCE THE MOVEMENT OF THE TROOPS!

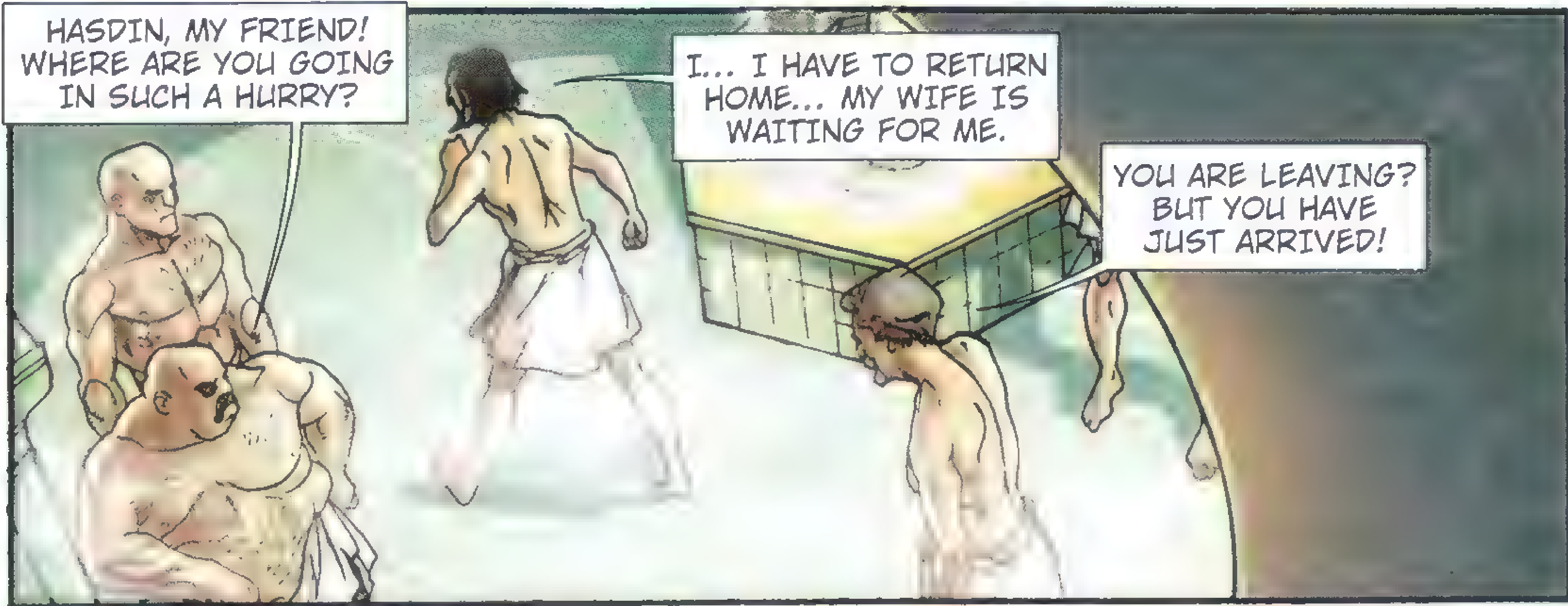


EXACTLY! OUR GOOD SULTAN IS PUTTING ON THE FRONT AND KEEPING THE TRUE SCEPTER HIDDEN AWAY, OUT OF PURE GR



UNBELIEVEABLE!

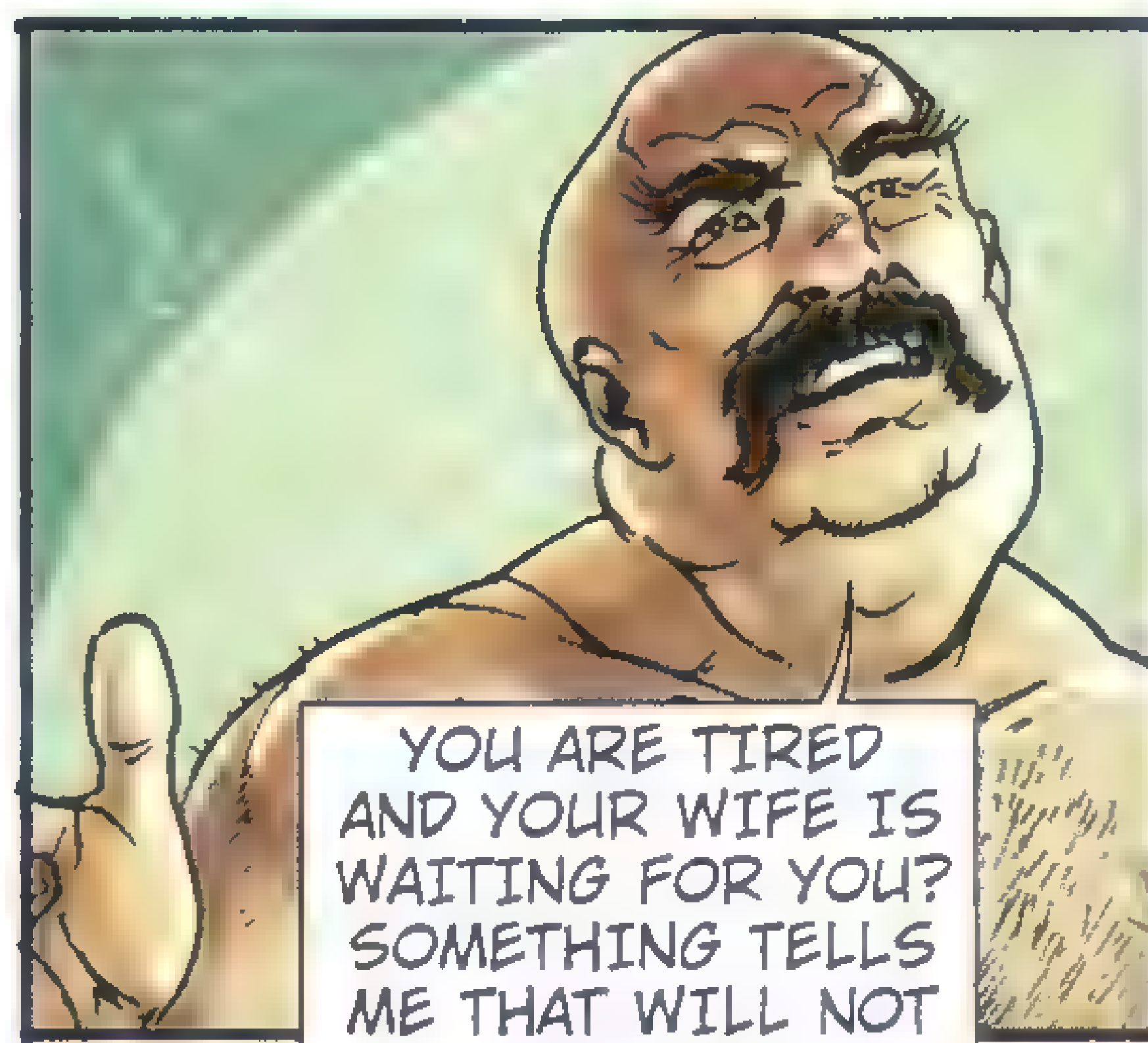
AN NASIR IS CRAFTY!



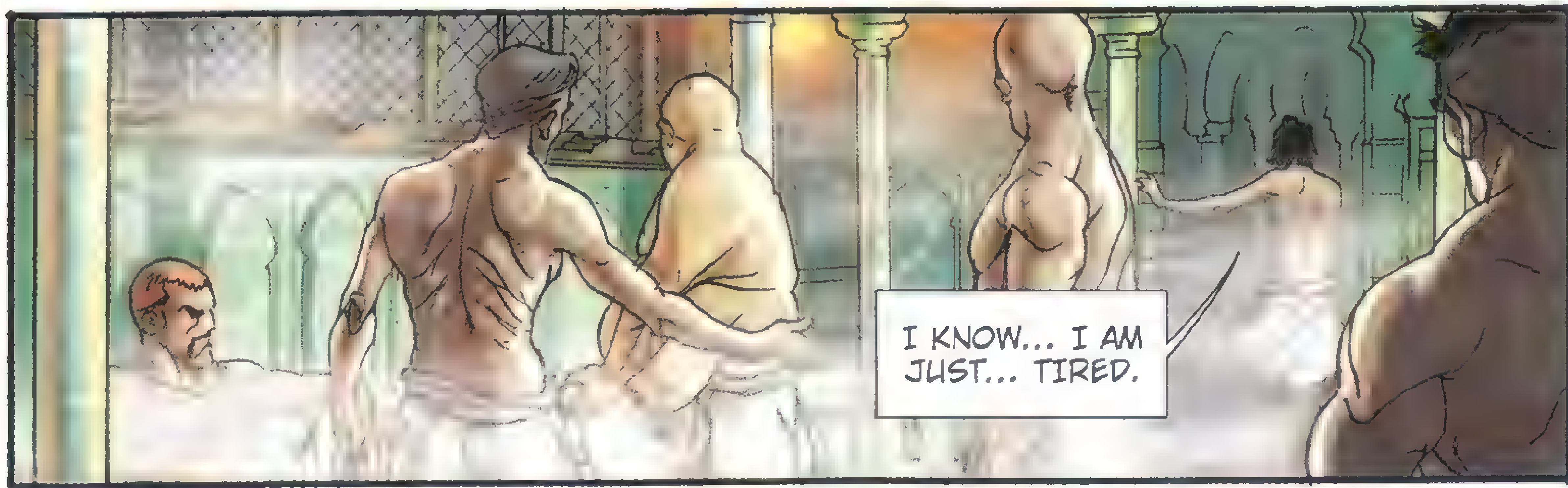
HASDIN, MY FRIEND! WHERE ARE YOU GOING IN SUCH A HURRY?

I... I HAVE TO RETURN HOME... MY WIFE IS WAITING FOR ME.

YOU ARE LEAVING? BUT YOU HAVE JUST ARRIVED!



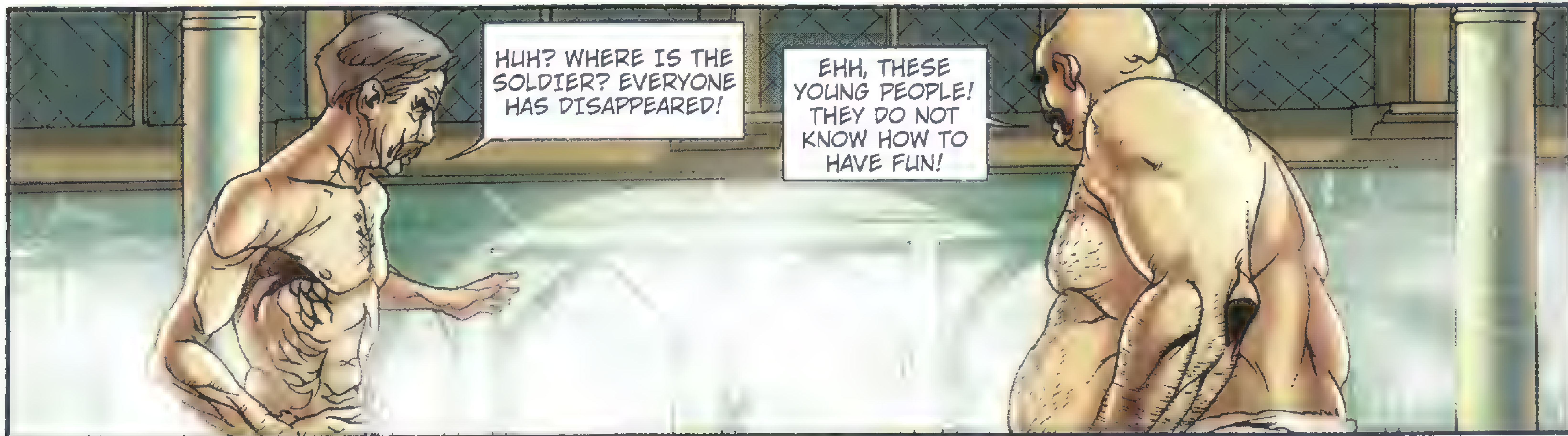
YOU ARE TIRED AND YOUR WIFE IS WAITING FOR YOU? SOMETHING TELLS ME THAT WILL NOT END WELL!



I KNOW... I AM JUST... TIRED.

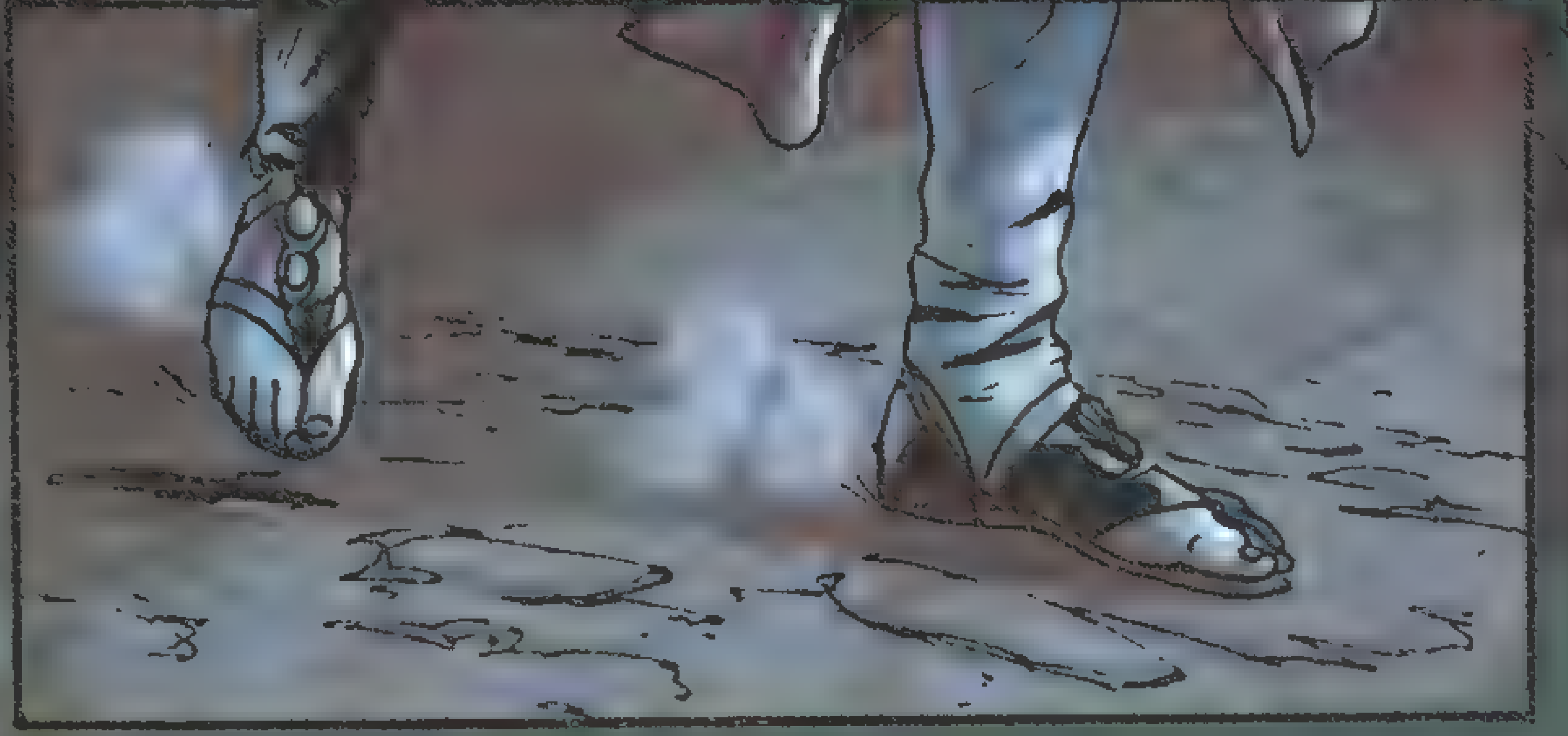


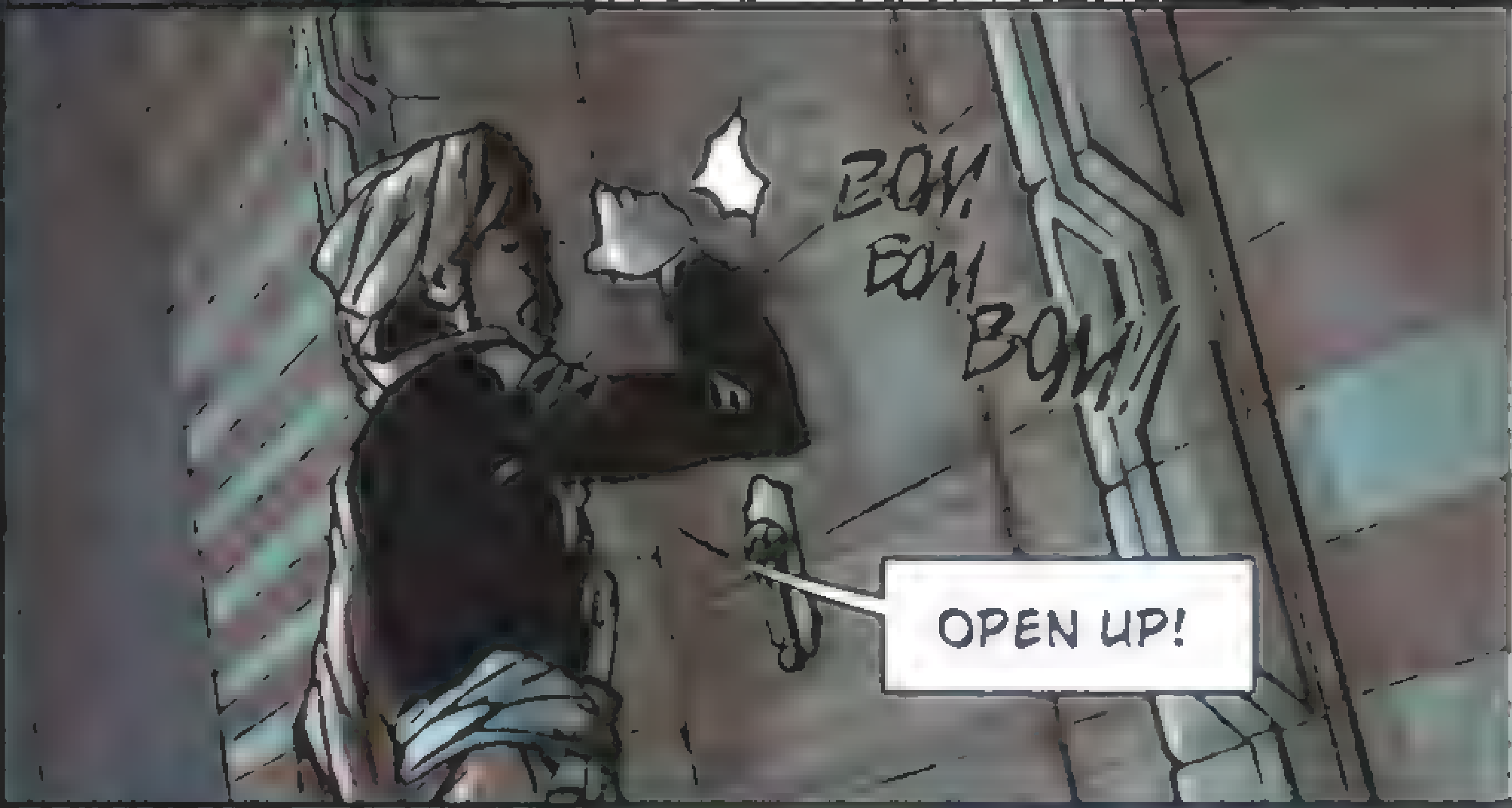
HAHAHA!



HUH? WHERE IS THE SOLDIER? EVERYONE HAS DISAPPEARED!

EHH, THESE YOUNG PEOPLE! THEY DO NOT KNOW HOW TO HAVE FUN!





OPEN UP!



WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I AM HASDIN AL-BELLAL. TELL YOUR MASTER THAT I MUST SPEAK WITH HIM!



MY MASTER IS ASLEEP. COME BACK TOMORROW!



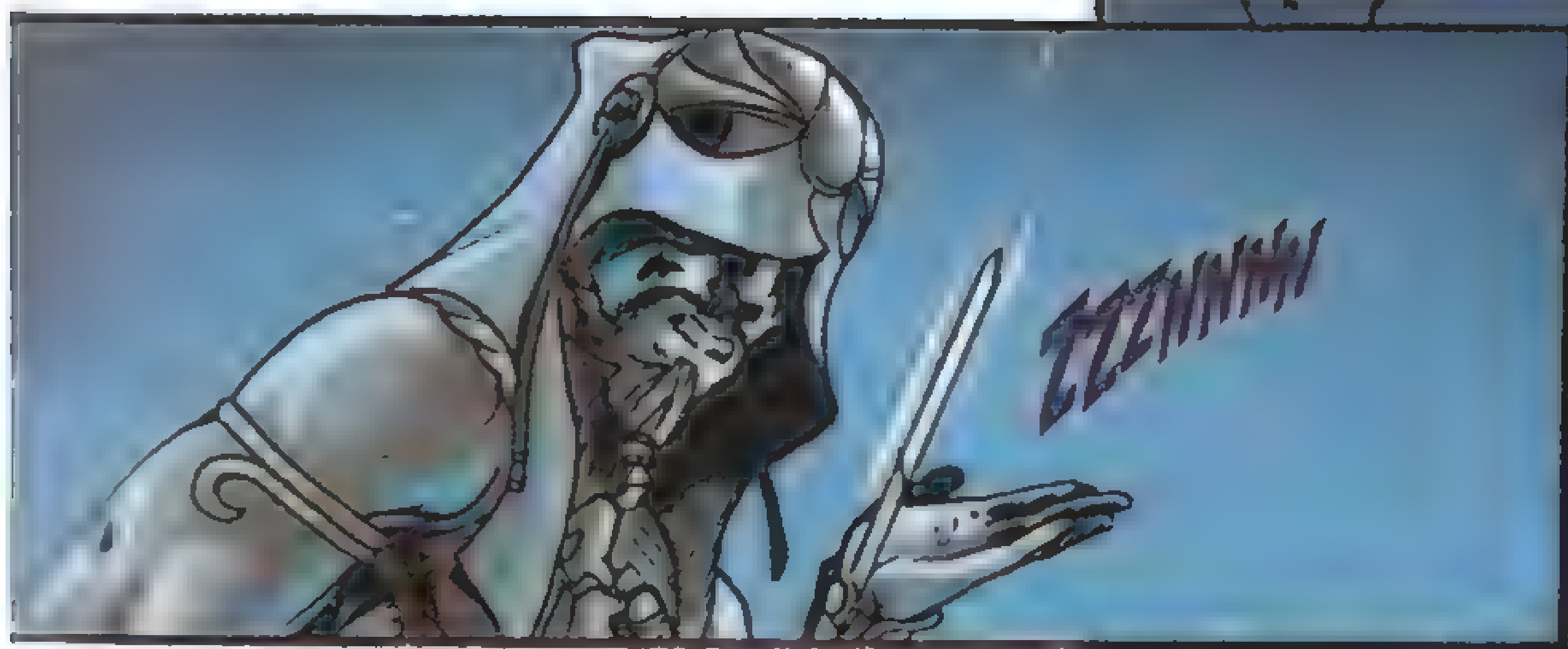
TOMORROW SHALL BE TOO LATE! AND IF BACHIR AL-DJALLIL LEARNS THAT YOU HAVE NOT ALLOWED ME TO ENTER, HE WILL BE FURIOUS! BELIEVE ME!



FINE... COME IN... I SHALL WAKE HIM.

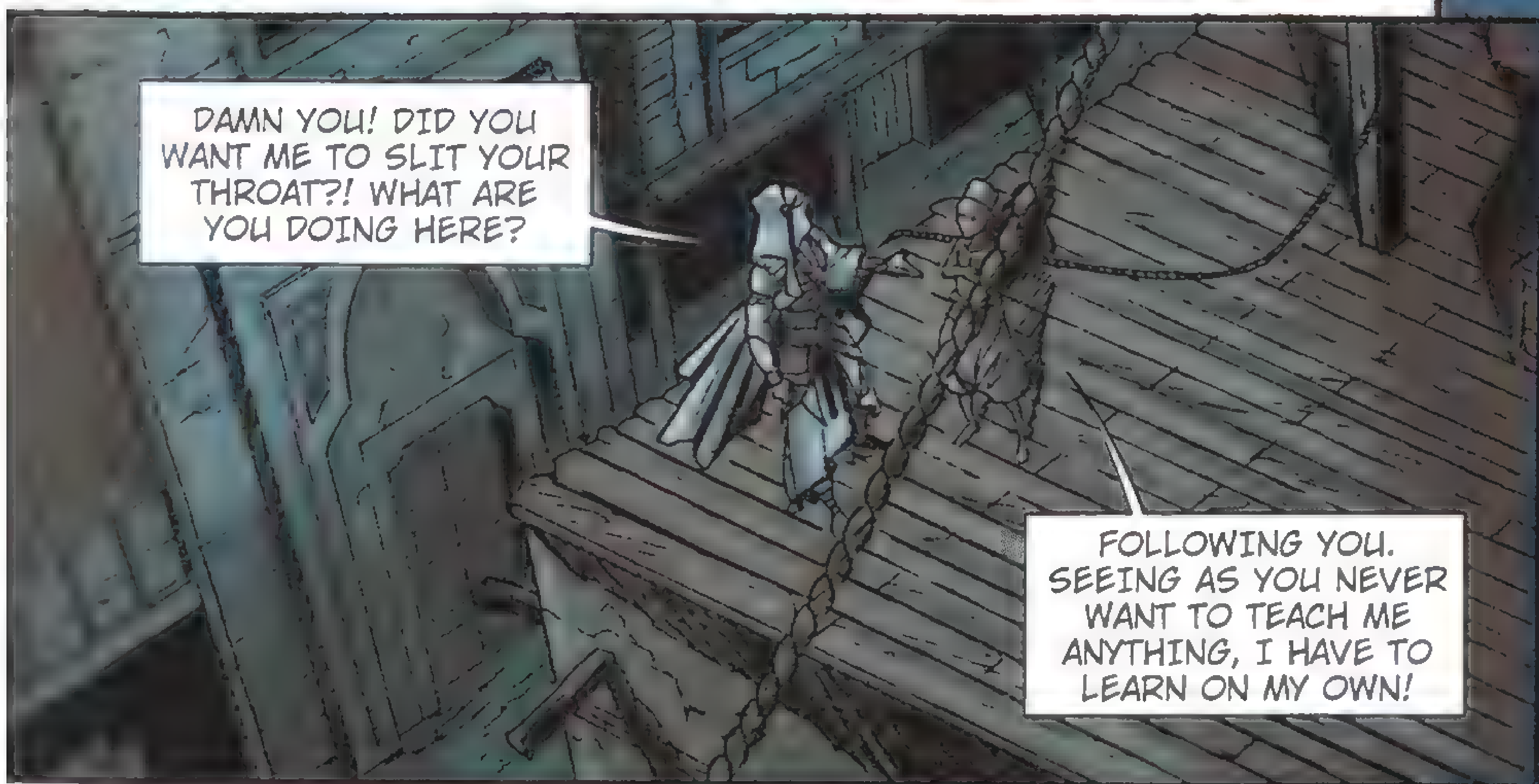


?!



WORRY NOT,
EL CAKR! IT IS
ONLY ME! YOU
CAN STOW YOUR
WEAPON!

ALI?



DAMN YOU! DID YOU
WANT ME TO SLIT YOUR
THROAT?! WHAT ARE
YOU DOING HERE?

FOLLOWING YOU.
SEEING AS YOU NEVER
WANT TO TEACH ME
ANYTHING, I HAVE TO
LEARN ON MY OWN!



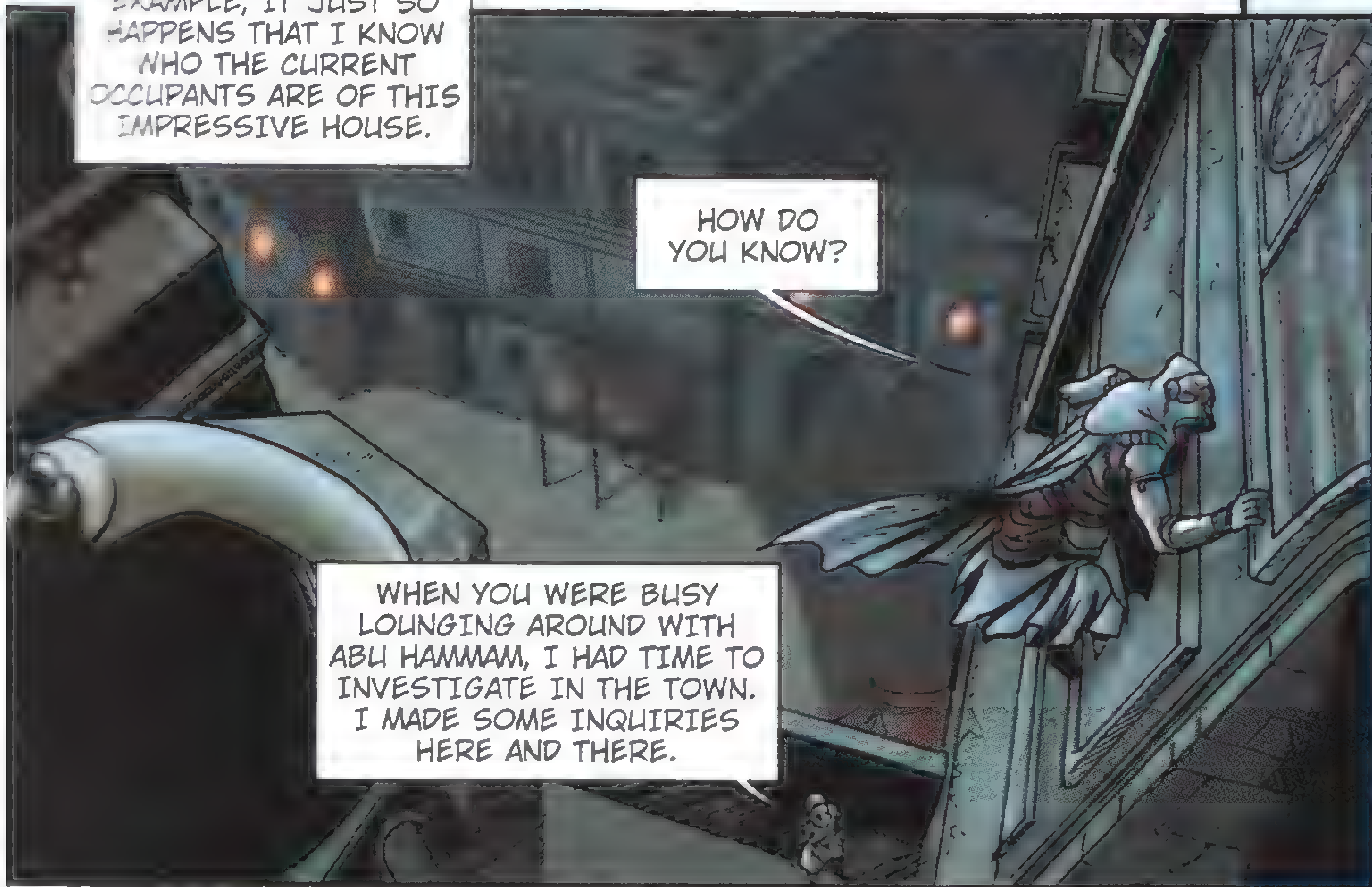
YOU COULD HAVE BEEN
DETECTED AND REVEALED
MY LOCATION!

NOBODY HEARD ME!
I WAS SO QUIET!



I SHOULD KICK YOU FROM HERE
TO THE NILE! YOUR PRESENCE HAS
PUT MY MISSION IN JEOPARDY!
YOU GOOD-FOR-NOTHING--

I WOULD NOT BE SO
CERTAIN, EL CAKR. FOR
EXAMPLE, IT JUST SO
HAPPENS THAT I KNOW
WHO THE CURRENT
OCCUPANTS ARE OF THIS
IMPRESSIVE HOUSE.



HOW DO
YOU KNOW?

WHEN YOU WERE BUSY
LOUNGING AROUND WITH
ABU HAMMAM, I HAD TIME TO
INVESTIGATE IN THE TOWN.
I MADE SOME INQUIRIES
HERE AND THERE.



AND?

AND
WHAT?

WHO LIVES
HERE?

WILL YOU ALLOW ME
TO ACCOMPANY YOU
IF I TELL YOU?



BLACKMAIL, ALI?
NO, IT IS OUT OF
THE QUESTION!

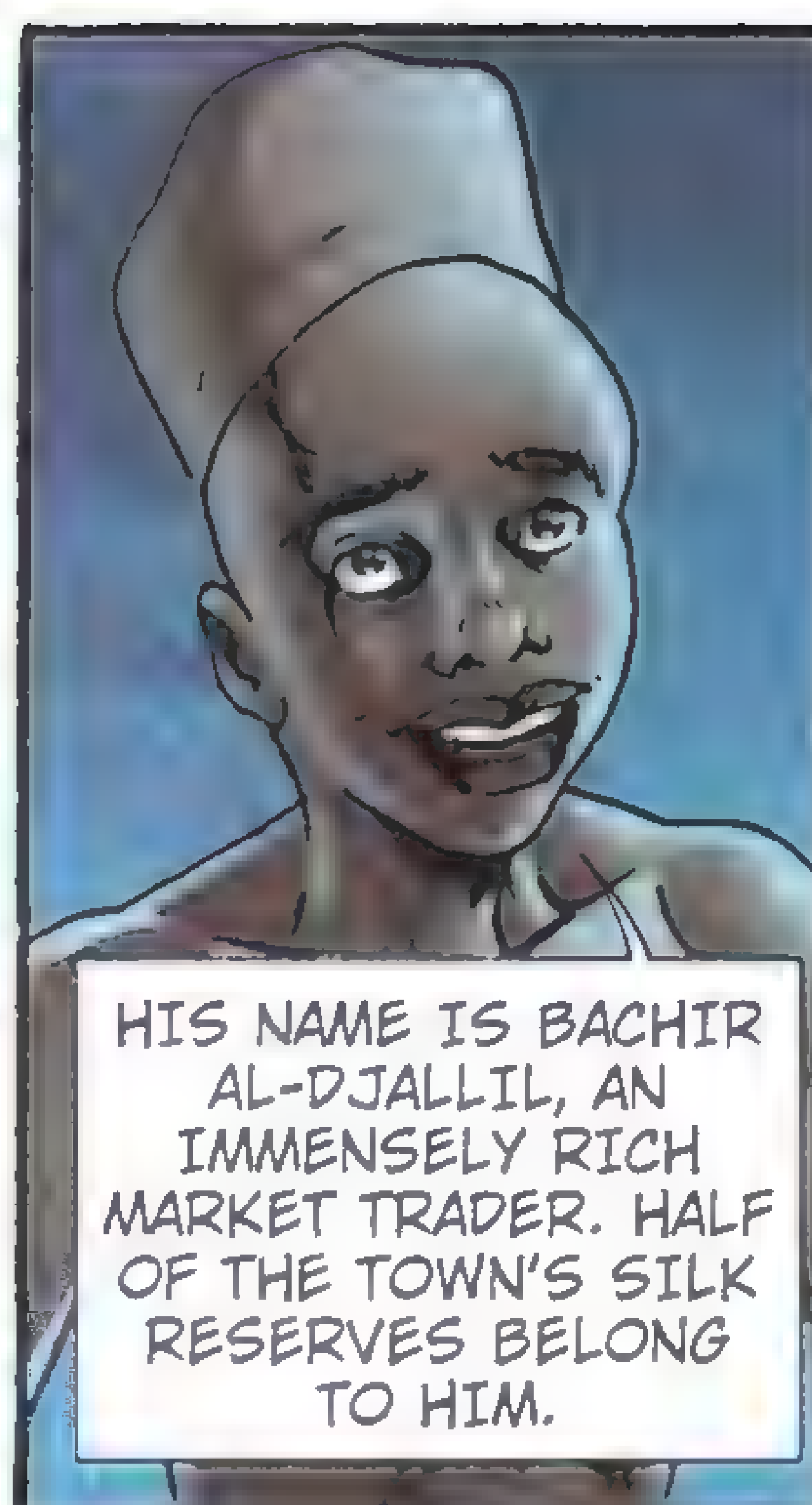
FINE, THEN I
SHALL TELL YOU
NOTHING...



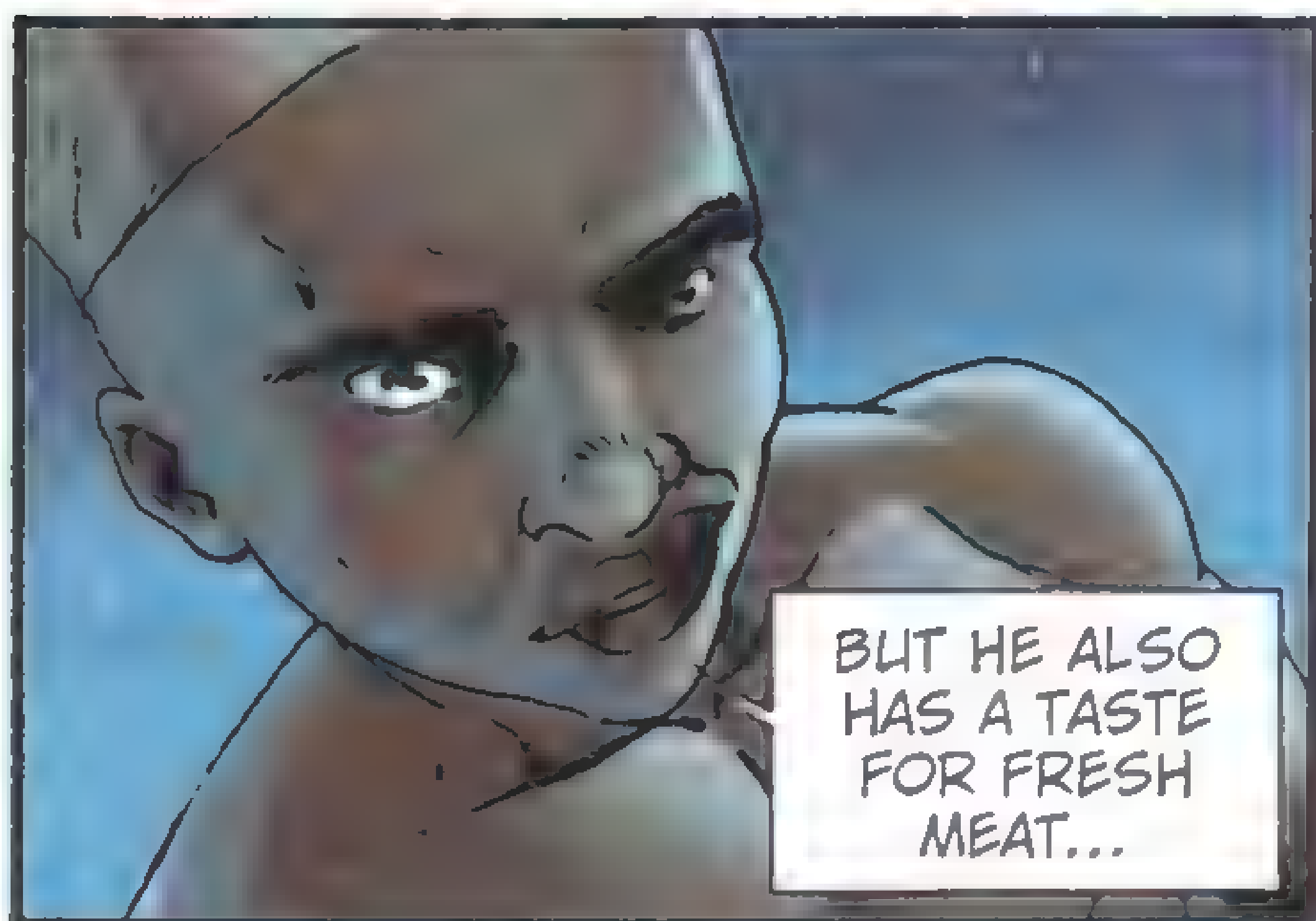
STUBBORN URCHIN!
VERY WELL, YOU
MAY COME.

PROMISE?

YES!



HIS NAME IS BACHIR
AL-DJALLIL, AN
IMMENSELY RICH
MARKET TRADER. HALF
OF THE TOWN'S SILK
RESERVES BELONG
TO HIM.

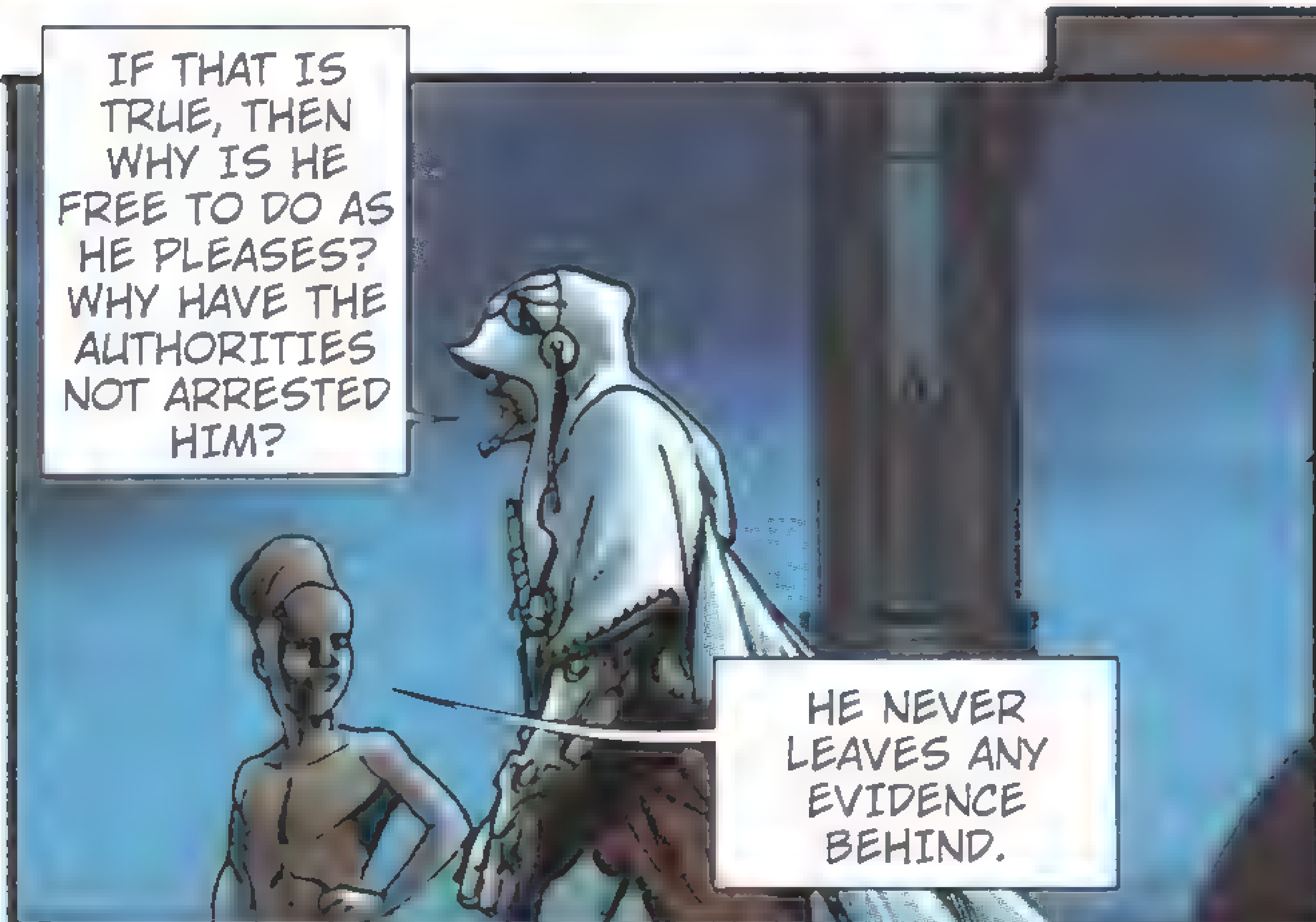


BUT HE ALSO
HAS A TASTE
FOR FRESH
MEAT...



WHAT DO
YOU MEAN?

HE IS A VILE BEING!
SOMEONE TOLD ME THAT
HE HAS RAPED AND KILLED
DOZENS OF YOUNG WOMEN.



IF THAT IS
TRUE, THEN
WHY IS HE
FREE TO DO AS
HE PLEASES?
WHY HAVE THE
AUTHORITIES
NOT ARRESTED
HIM?

HE NEVER
LEAVES ANY
EVIDENCE
BEHIND.

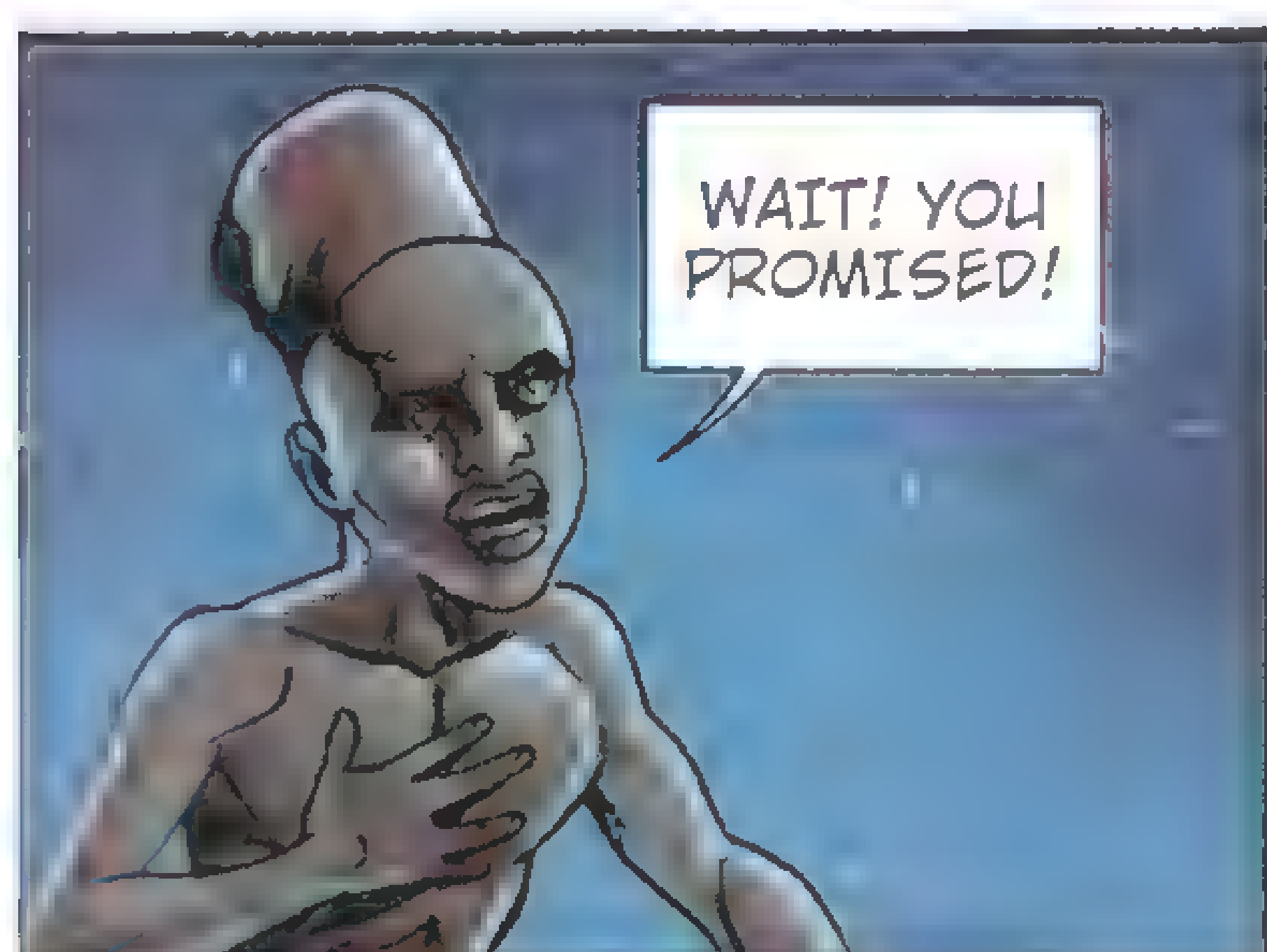
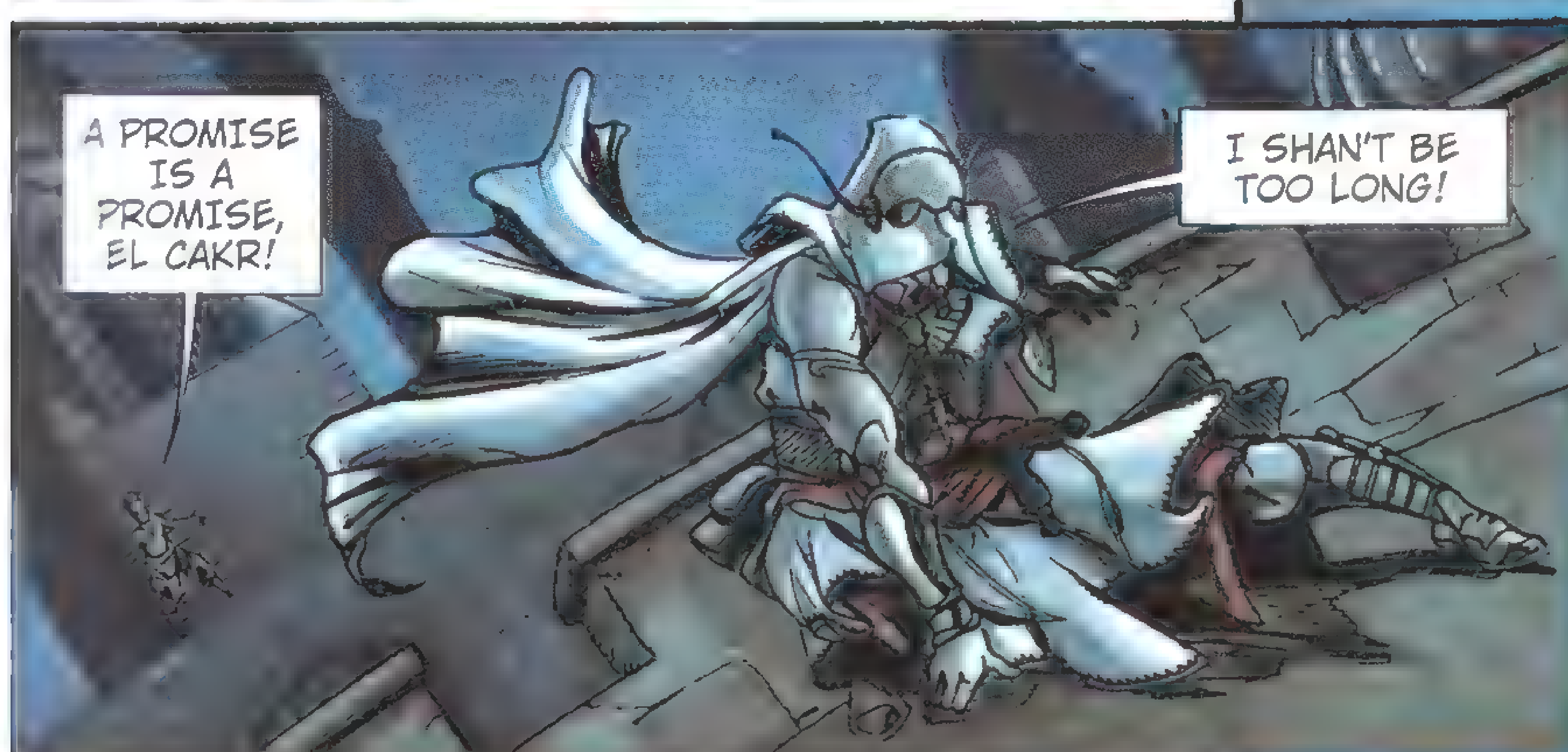


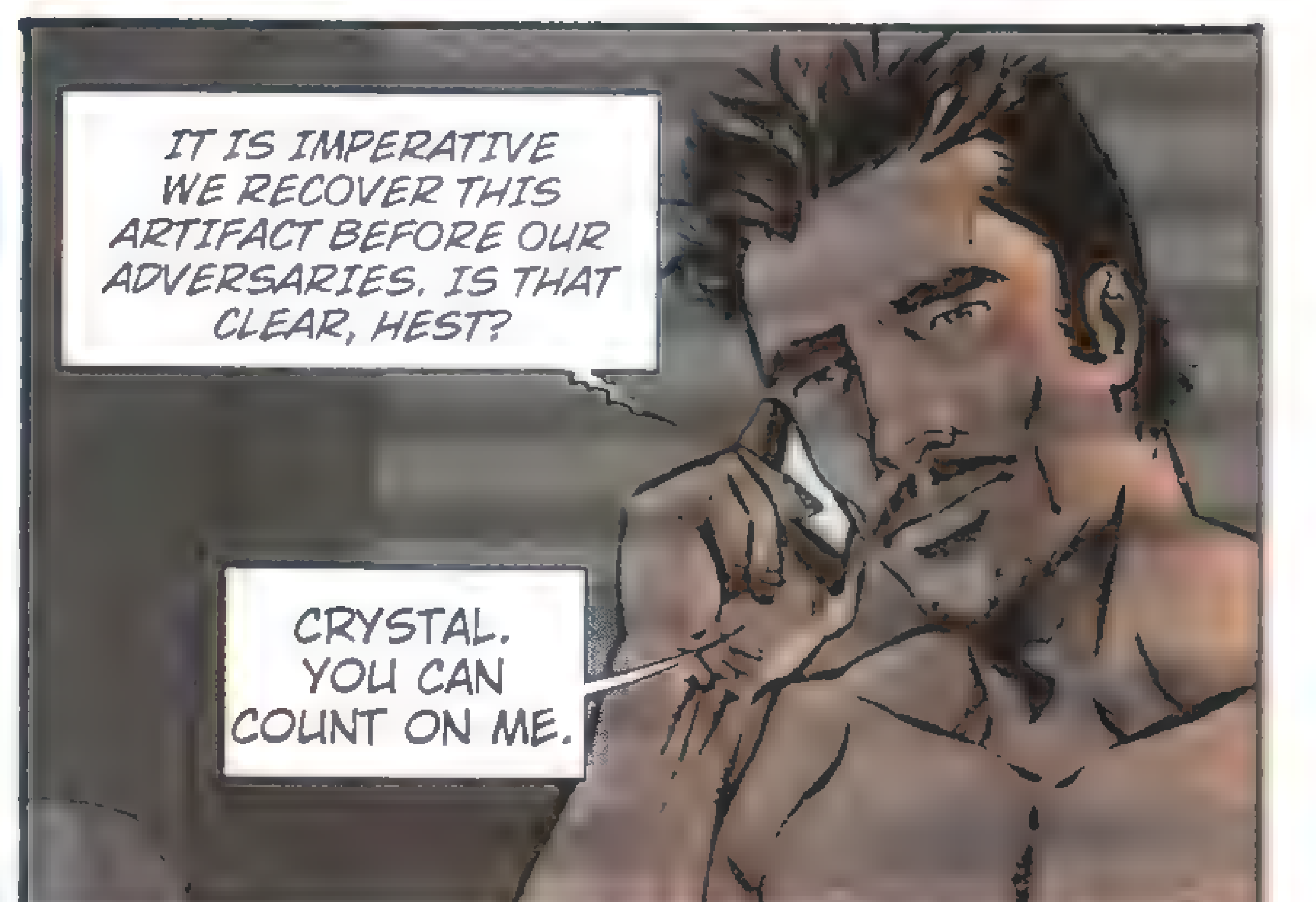
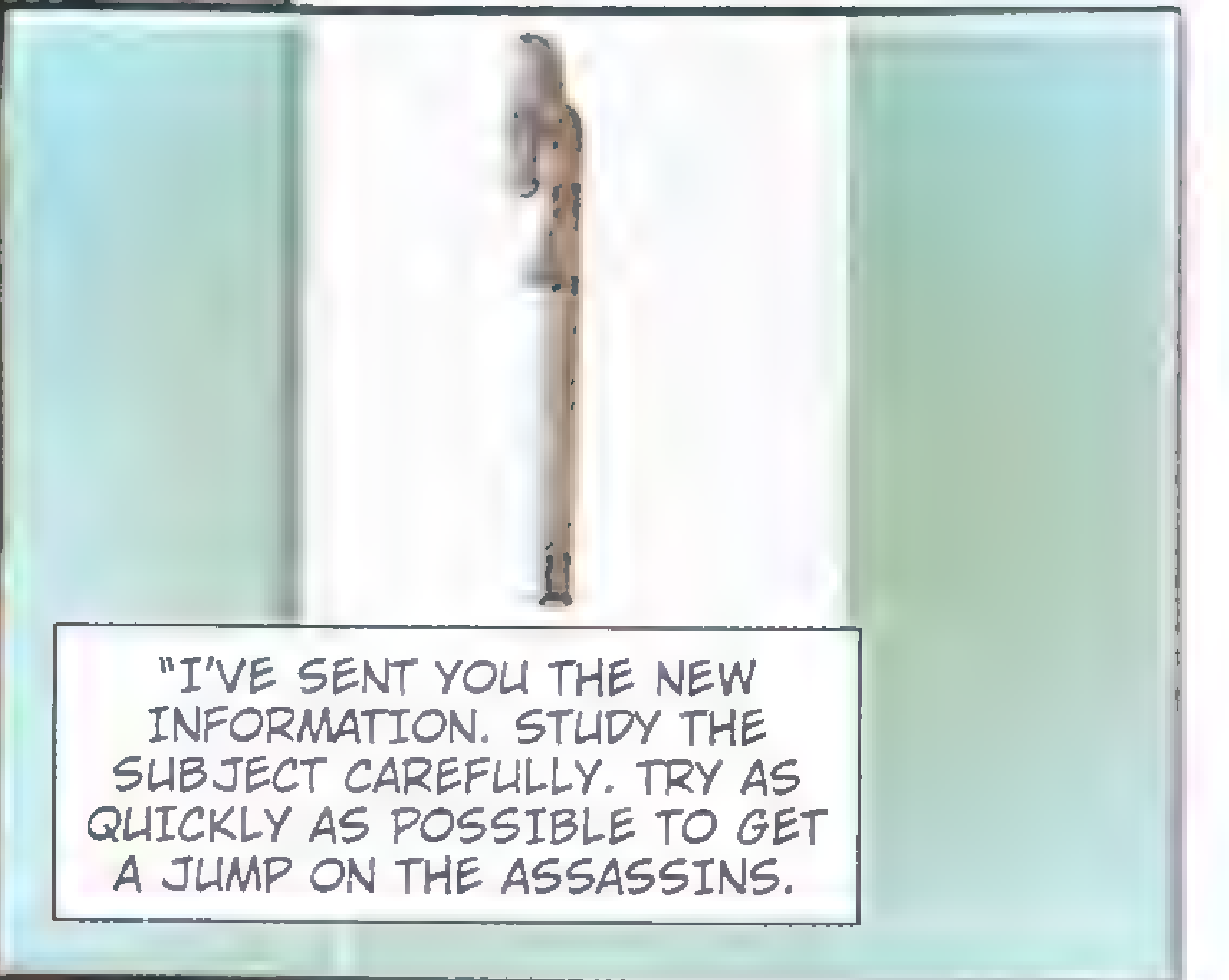
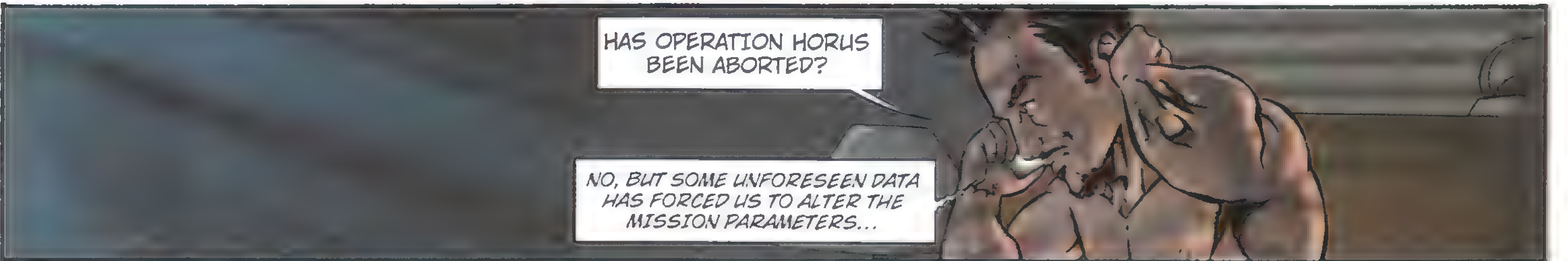
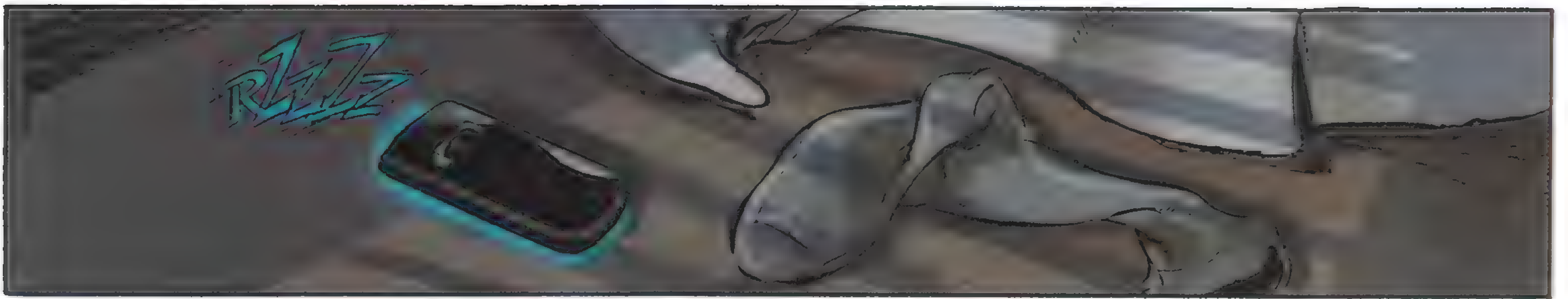
THIS IS EXCELLENT
INFORMATION!
GOOD WORK, ALI
AL-GHRAIB!

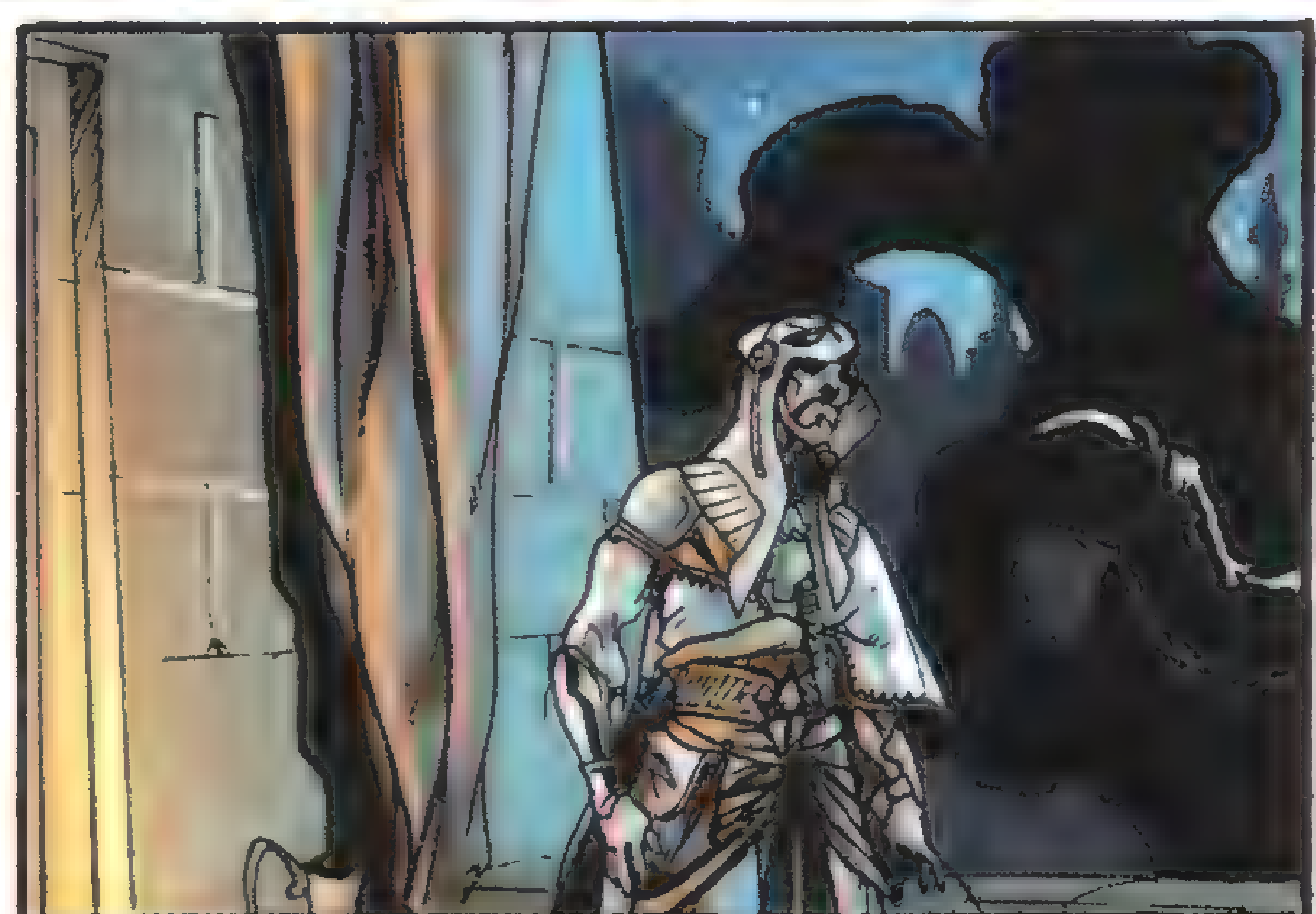
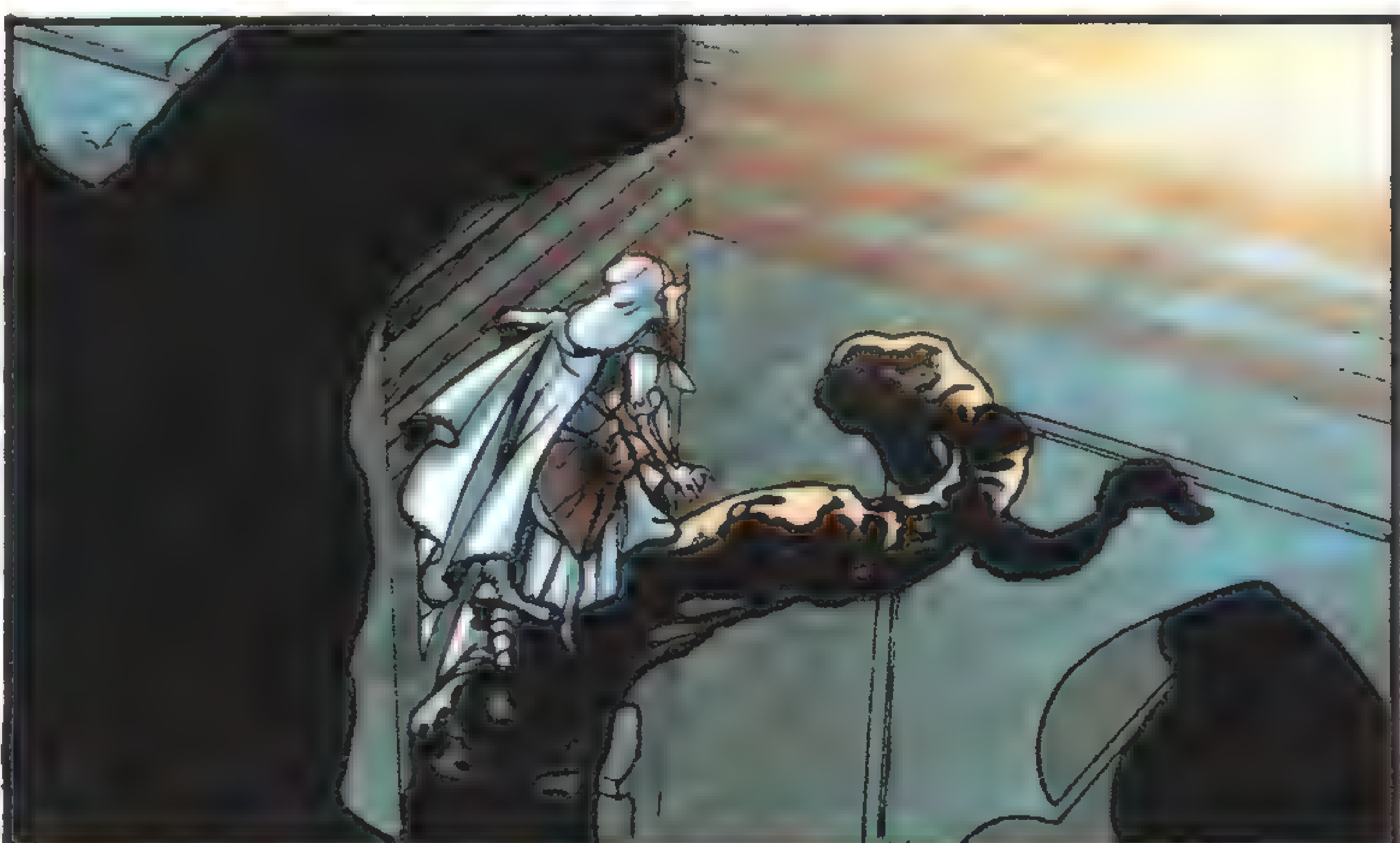
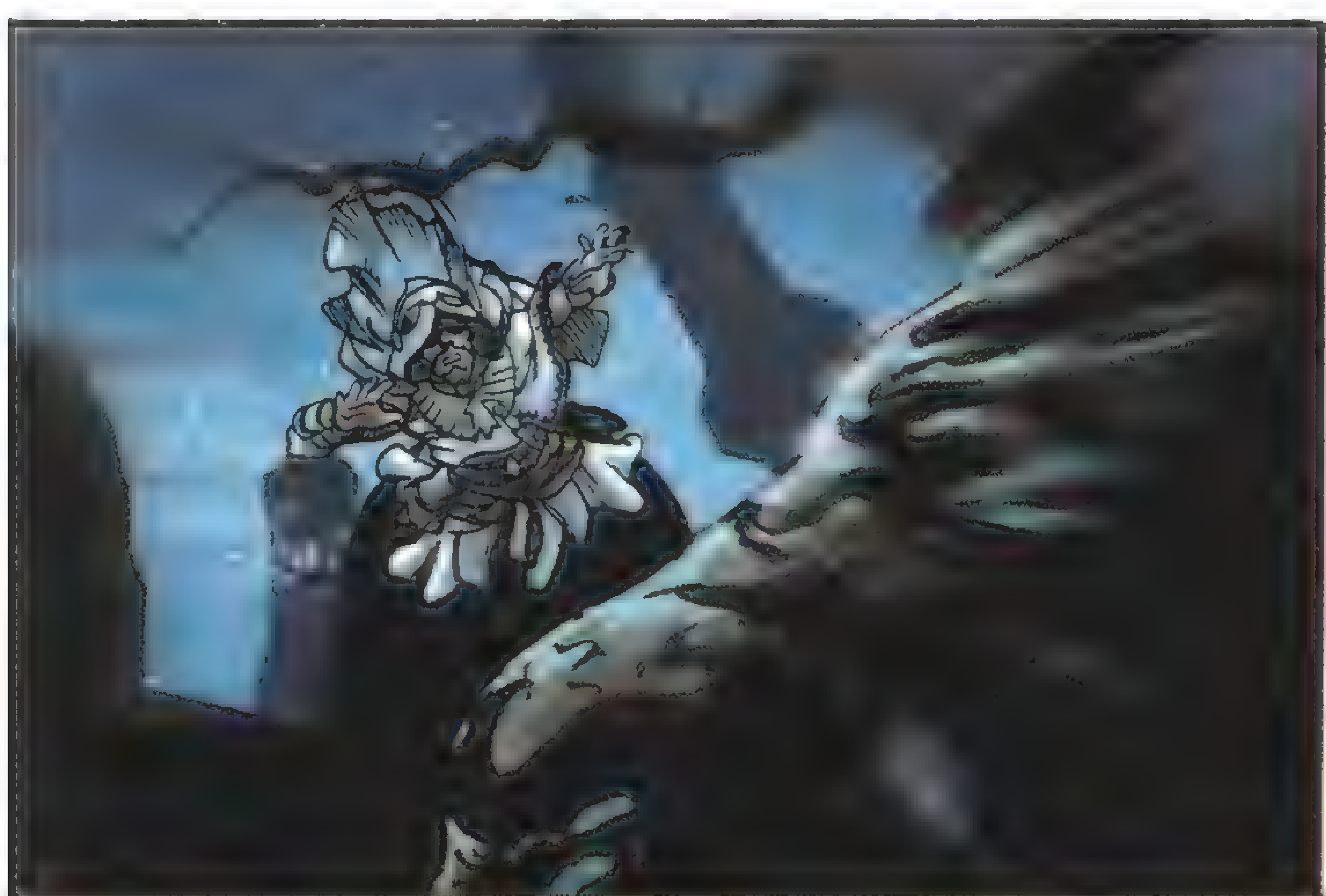
HUH?
LOOK!

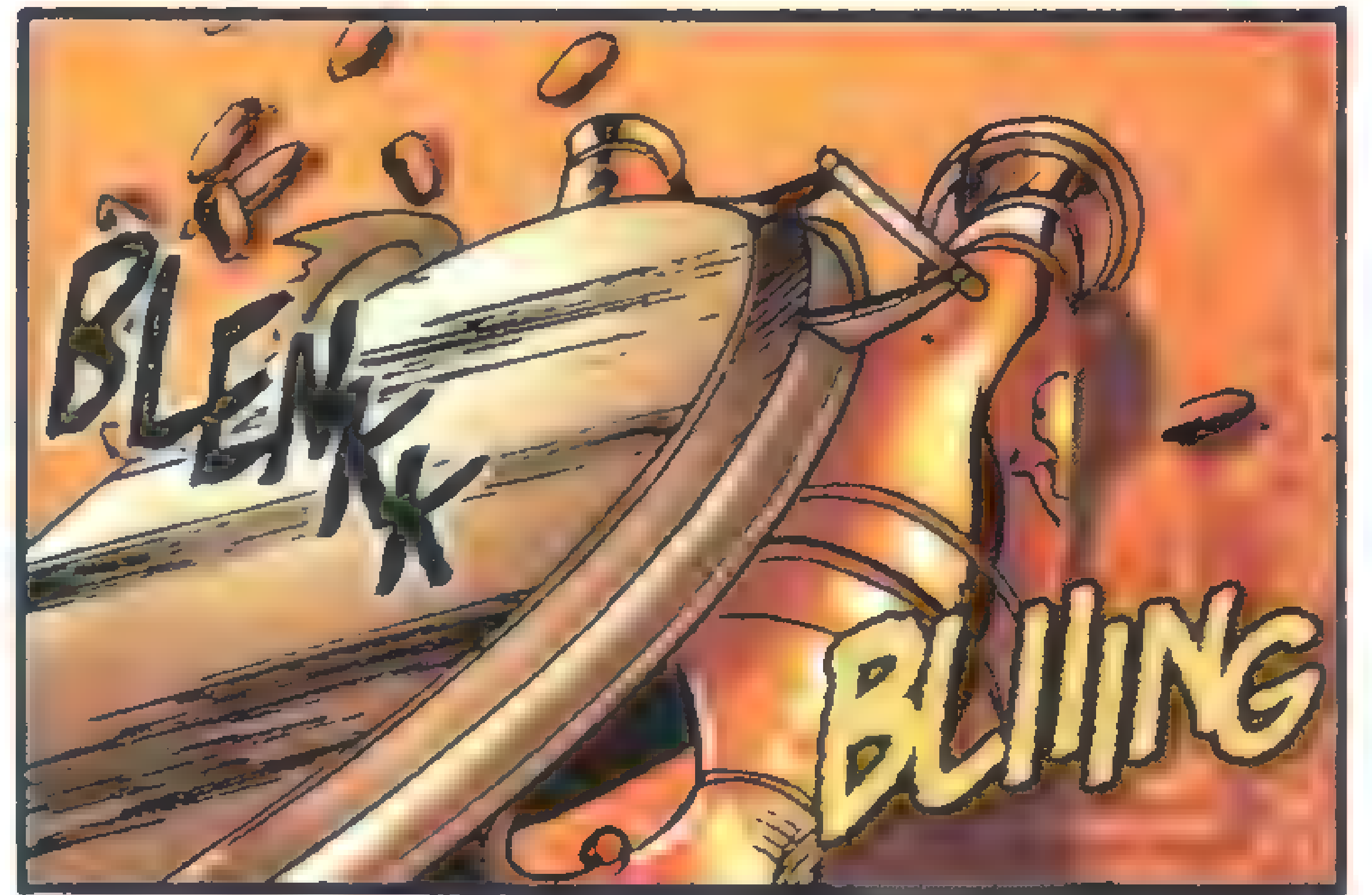
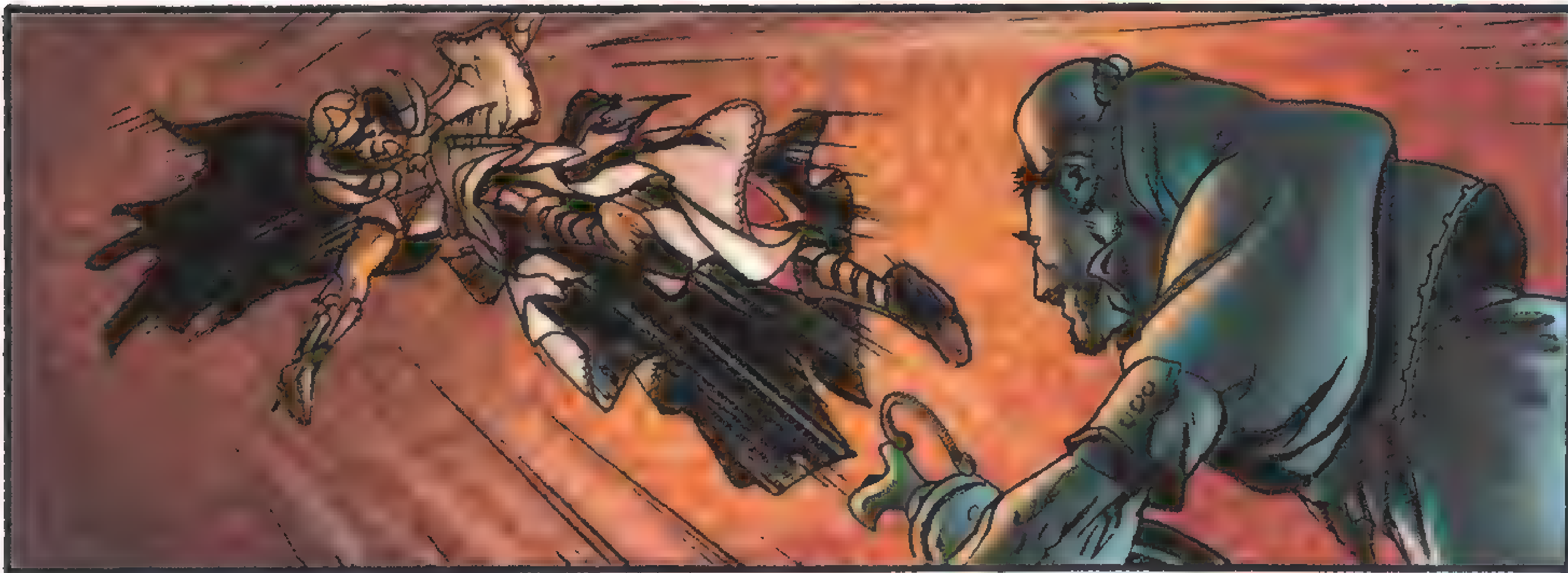


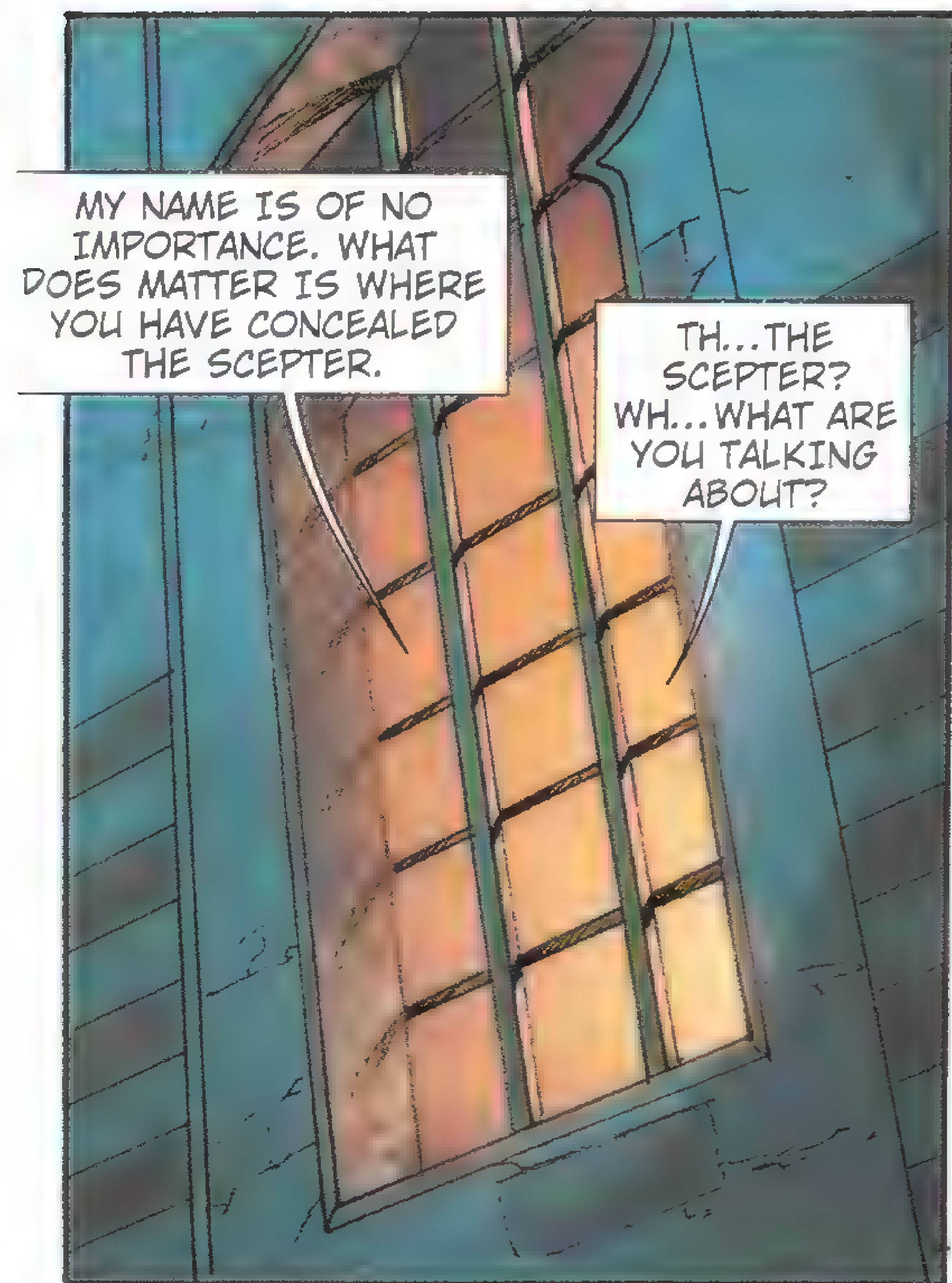
THE MAN
YOU WERE
FOLLOWING.
HE HAS LEFT!





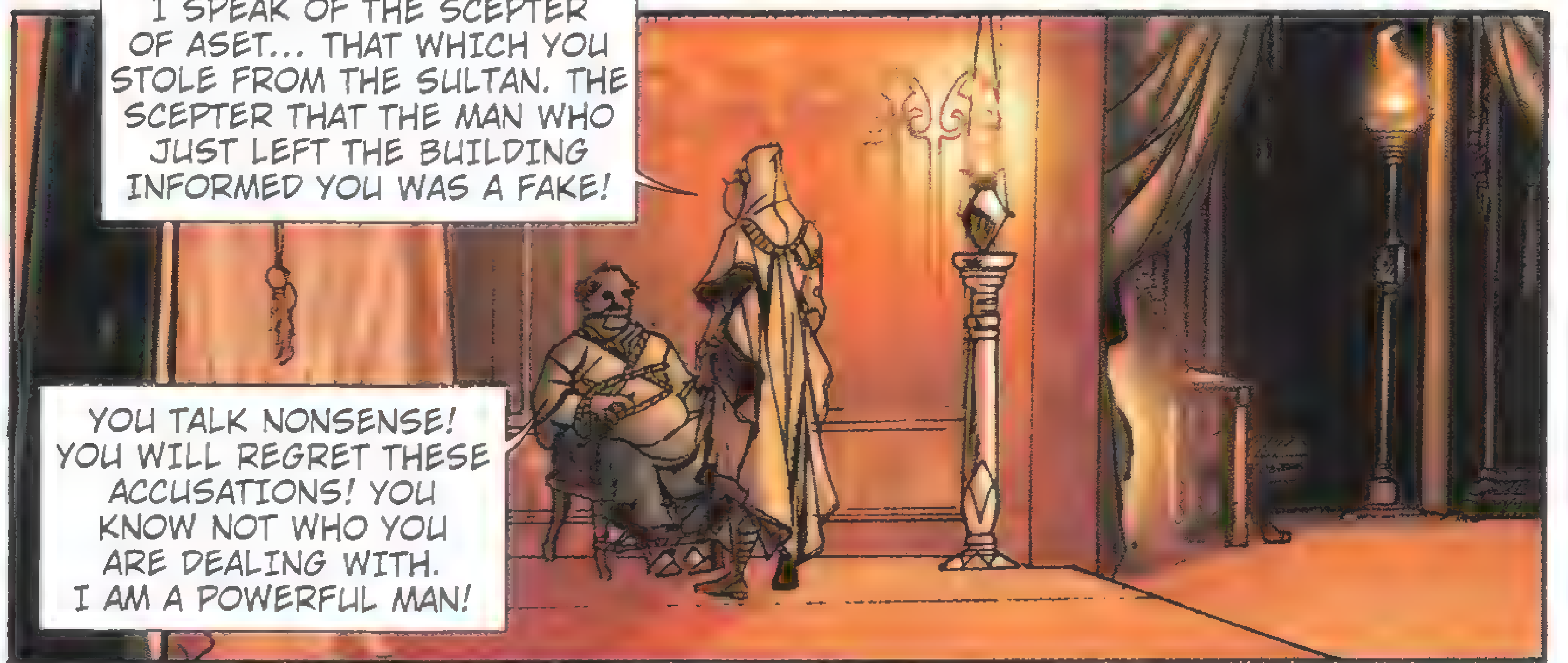






MY NAME IS OF NO IMPORTANCE. WHAT DOES MATTER IS WHERE YOU HAVE CONCEALED THE SCEPTER.

TH...THE SCEPTER? WH...WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



I SPEAK OF THE SCEPTER OF ASET... THAT WHICH YOU STOLE FROM THE SULTAN. THE SCEPTER THAT THE MAN WHO JUST LEFT THE BUILDING INFORMED YOU WAS A FAKE!

YOU TALK NONSENSE! YOU WILL REGRET THESE ACCUSATIONS! YOU KNOW NOT WHO YOU ARE DEALING WITH. I AM A POWERFUL MAN!



I AM BACH--

AAAAHHHH!

KKK!



I SHALL TELL YOU A SECRET, BACHIR... I HAVE NOWHERE TO BE, NOWHERE TO GO. I HAVE ALL THE TIME IN THE WORLD. I COULD SPEND THE ENTIRE NIGHT TORTURING YOU. I MAY EVEN HAVE FUN WHILE DOING IT.

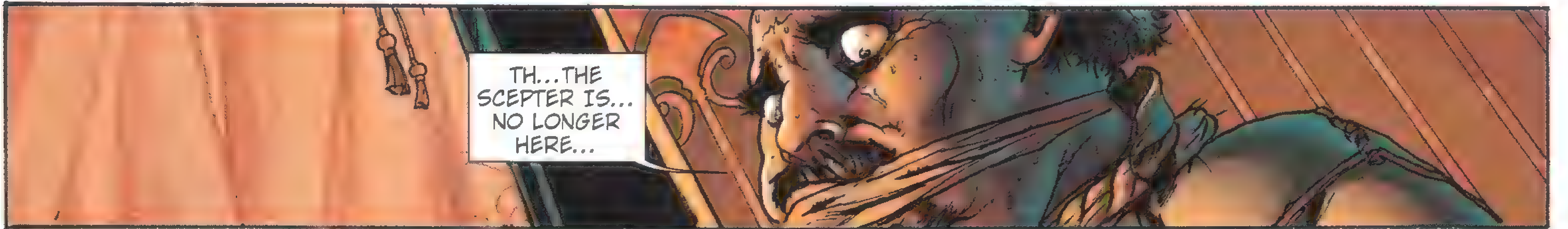
THAT WOULD AVENGE THOSE POOR YOUNG WOMEN THAT YOU TERRORIZED BEFORE YOU BUTCHERED THEM.

IN YOUR UNWORTHY OPINION, HOW MANY FINGERS DO YOU THINK IT NECESSARY TO LIVE A LIFE AS WRETCHED AS YOURS?

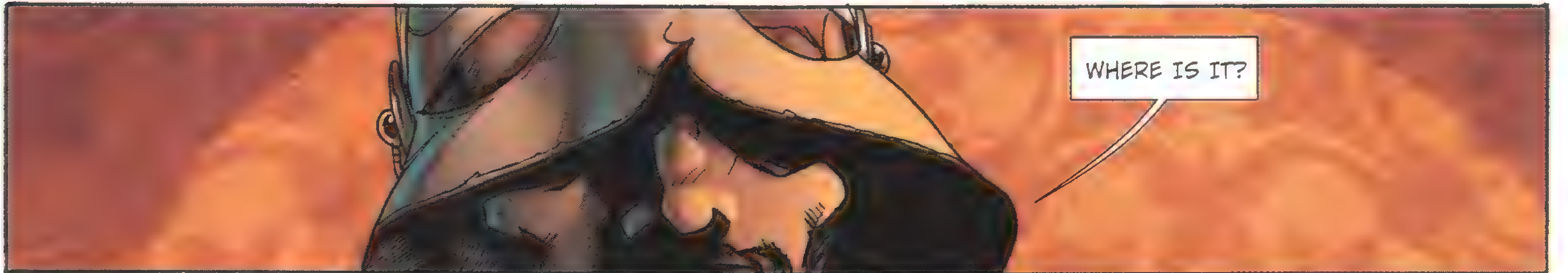
IF I LEAVE YOUR THUMBS AND INDEX FINGERS, THAT SHOULD BE ENOUGH, YES?

I DO NOT KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT! I KNOW NOTHING!

AHHHH! NOOO! STOP!



TH...THE SCEPTER IS... NO LONGER HERE...



WHERE IS IT?



LISTEN... I... I DO NOT KNOW MUCH. I WAS ONLY INVOLVED FROM AFAR. I KNOW NOT THE IDENTITY OF THE THIEVES...

I KNOW WHO THEY ARE! WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS WHERE THEY CAN BE FOUND!



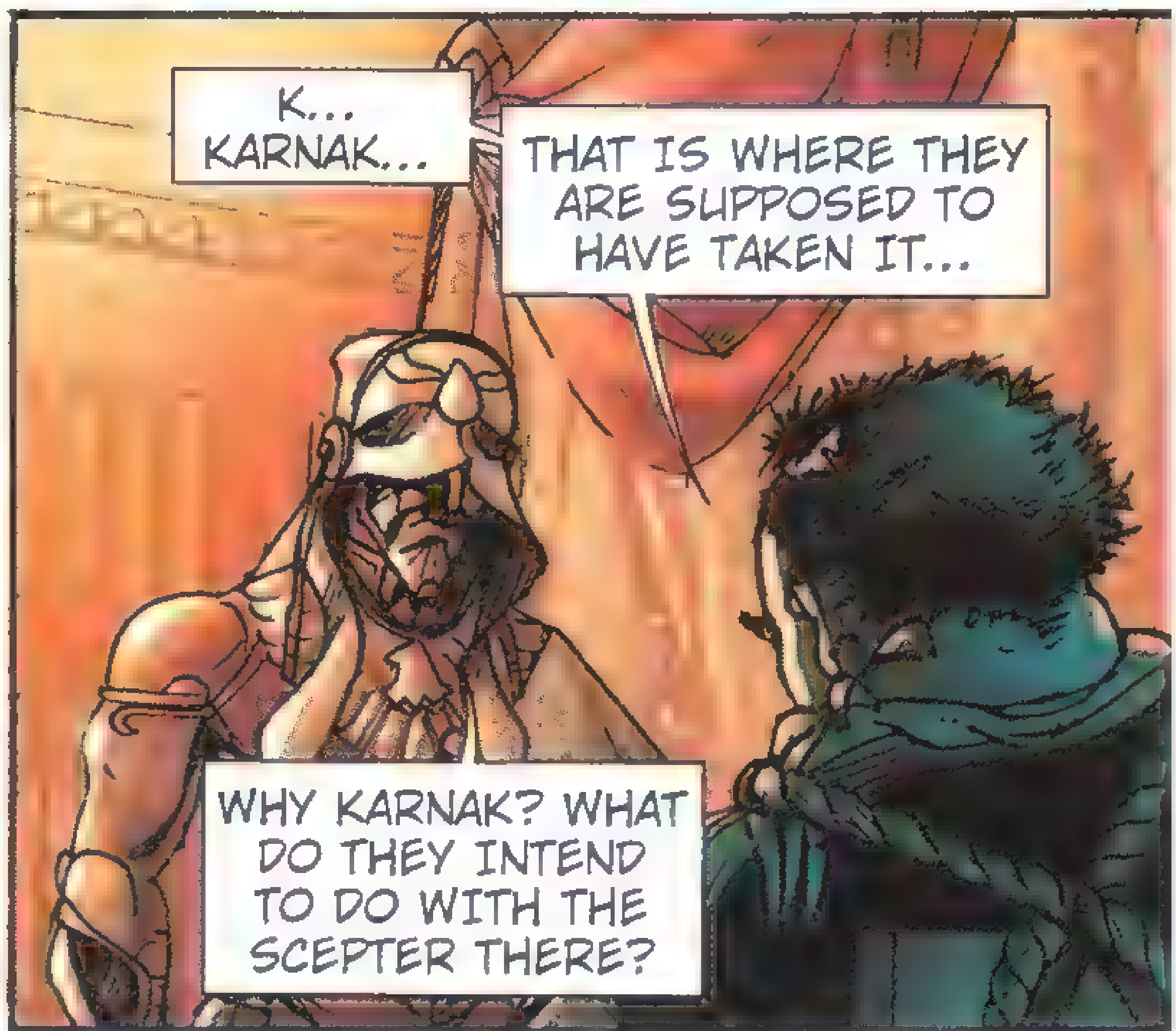
WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF THEIR LOCATION IF THE SCEPTER IS A FAKE?



ANSWER ME!

KUKK!

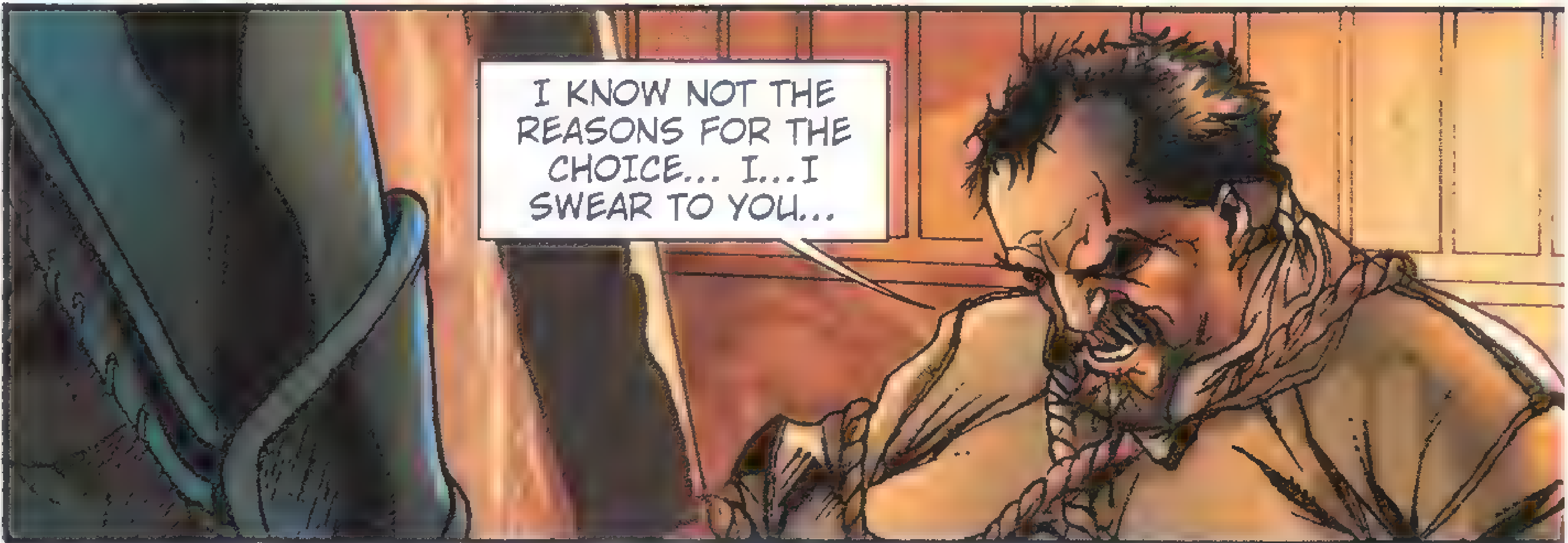
AAAAH!



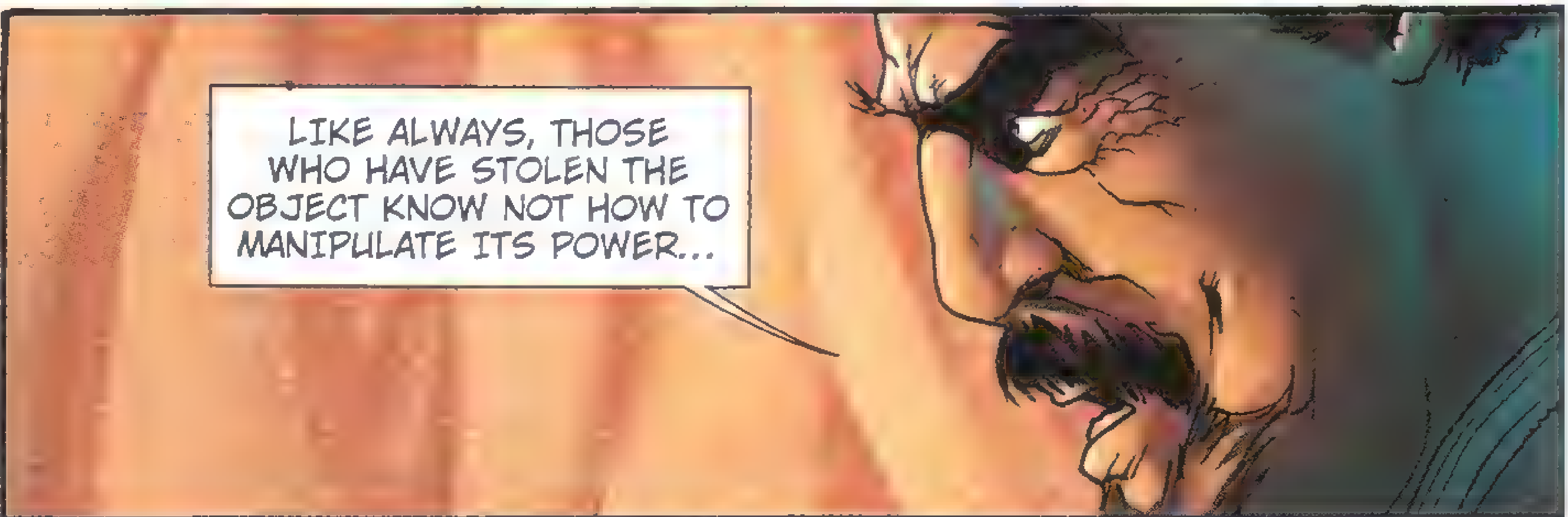
K... KARNAK...

THAT IS WHERE THEY ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE TAKEN IT...

WHY KARNAK? WHAT DO THEY INTEND TO DO WITH THE SCEPTER THERE?



I KNOW NOT THE REASONS FOR THE CHOICE... I...I SWEAR TO YOU...



LIKE ALWAYS, THOSE WHO HAVE STOLEN THE OBJECT KNOW NOT HOW TO MANIPULATE ITS POWER...

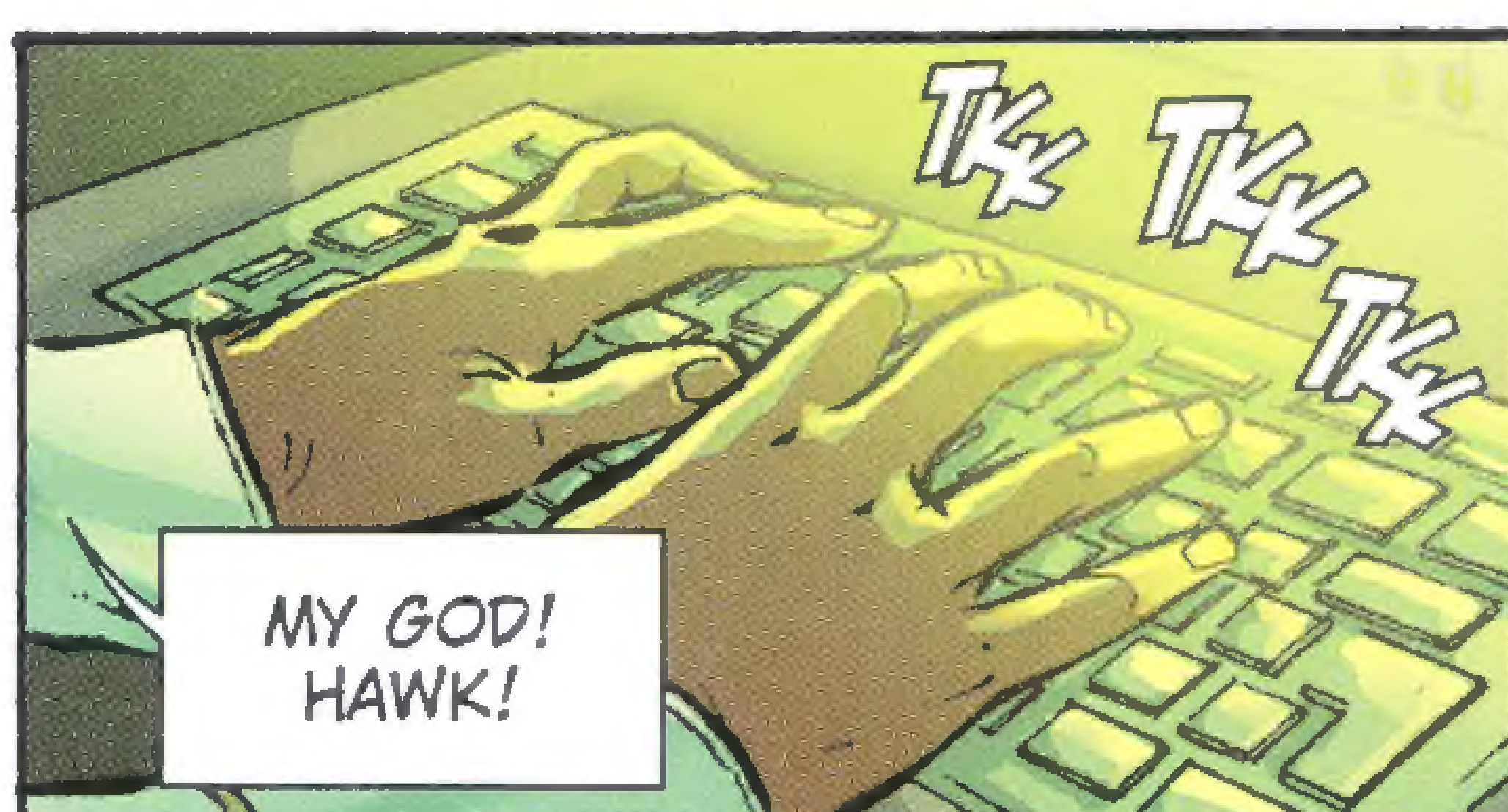
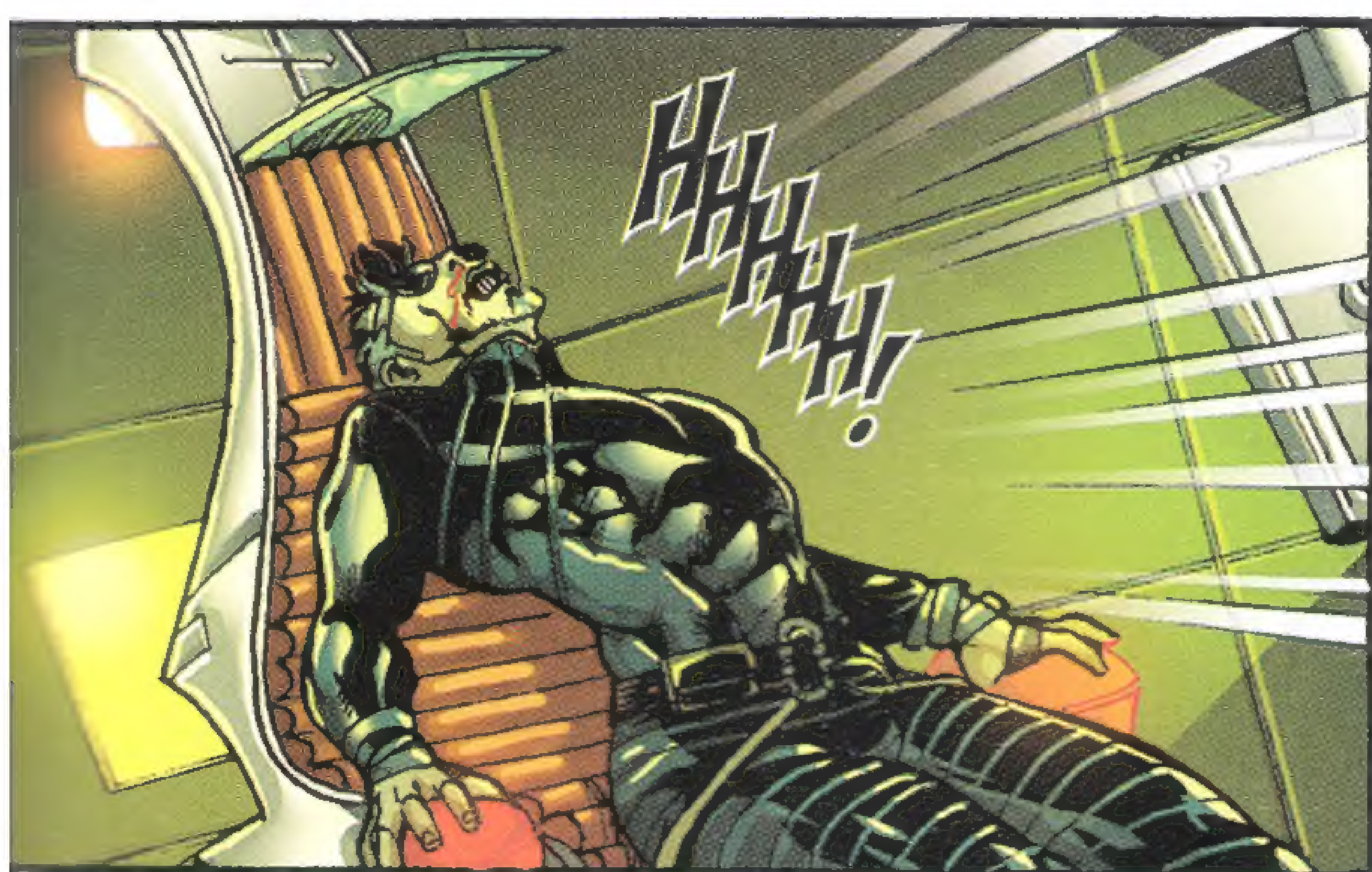


VERY WELL. SINCE YOU HAVE TOLD ME EVERYTHING THAT YOU KNOW, IT'S TIME FOR US TO LEAVE ONE ANOTHER...

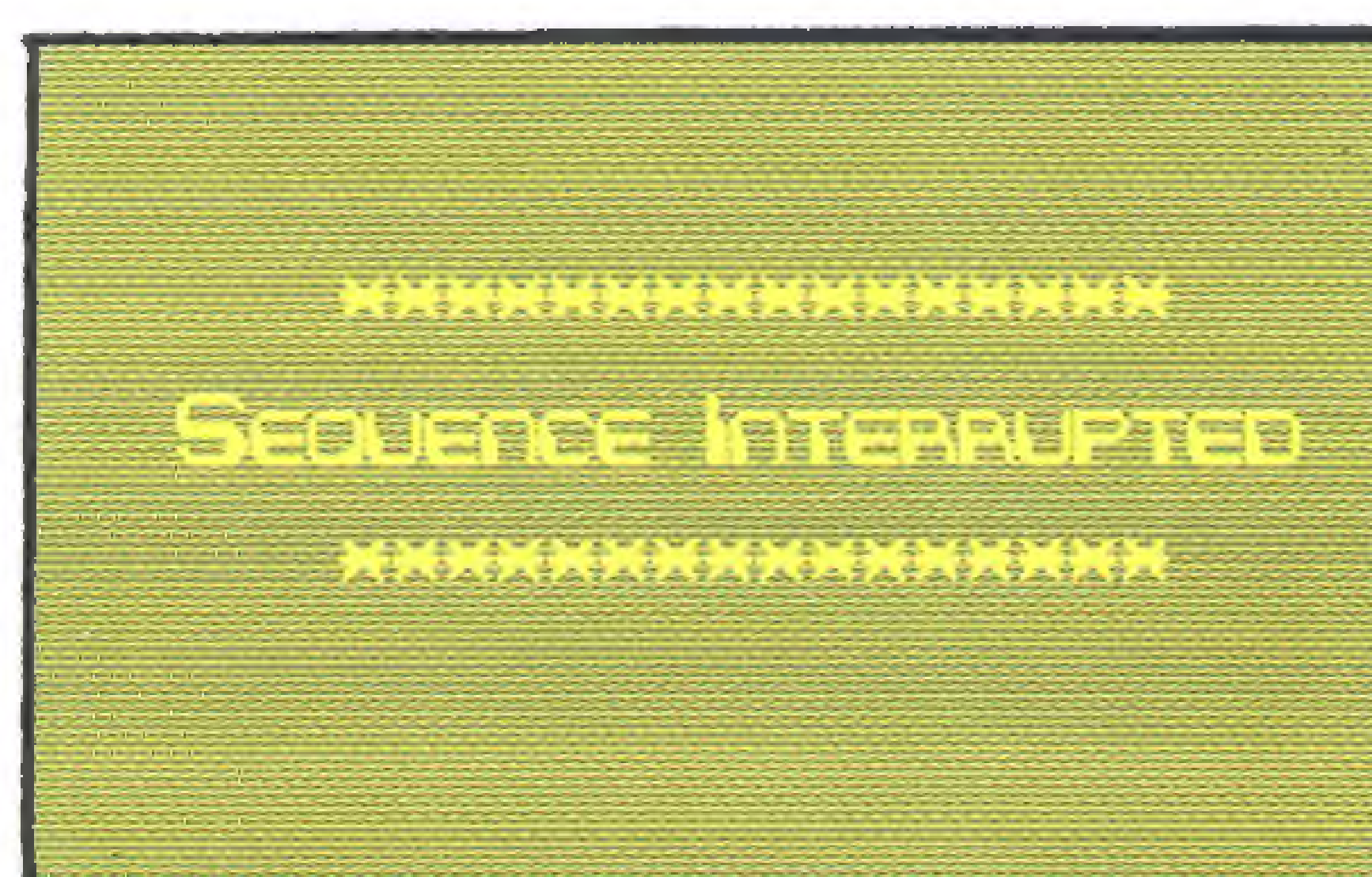


FAREWELL, BACHIR AL-DJALLIL!

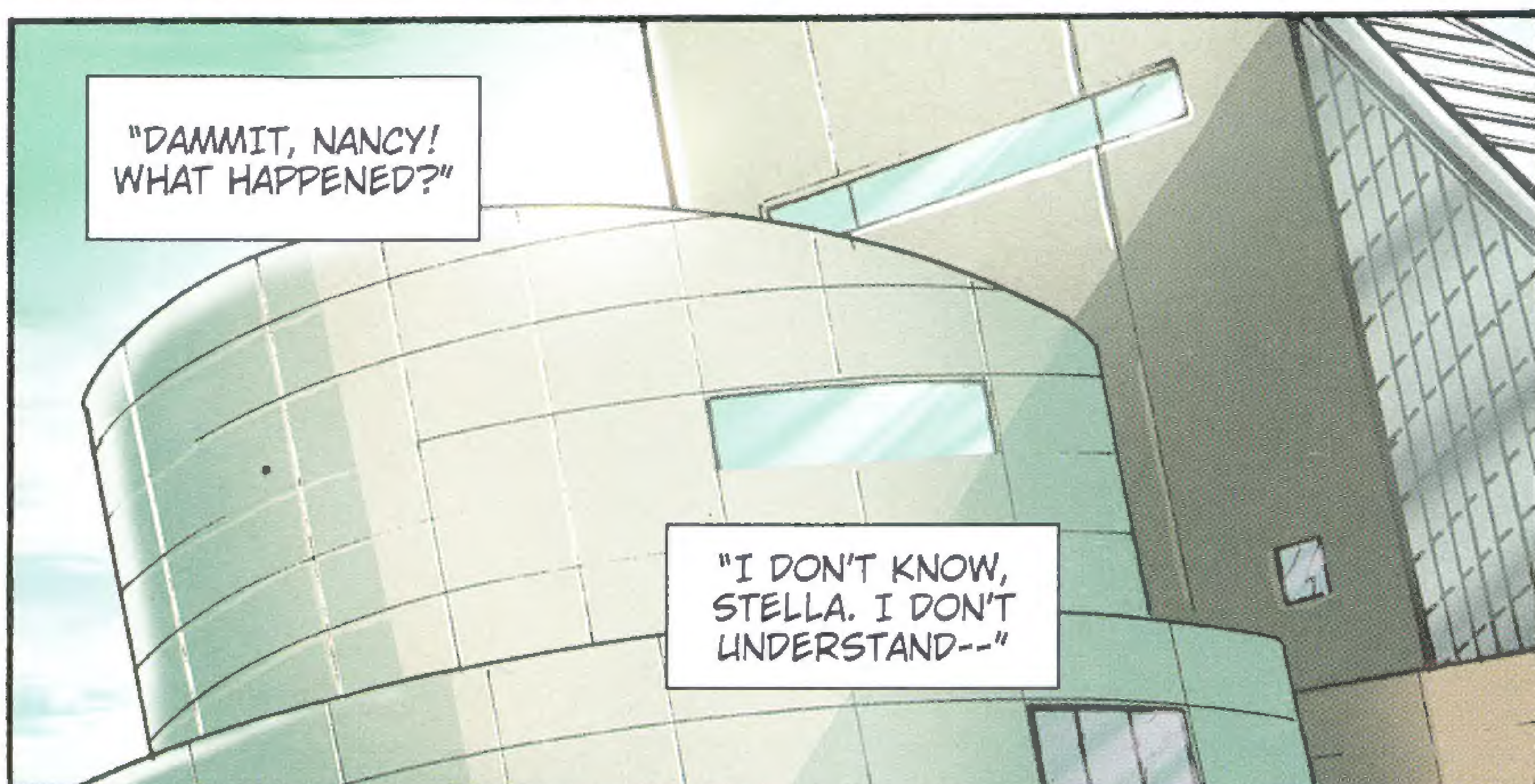
AAAAARGH



MY GOD!
HAWK!

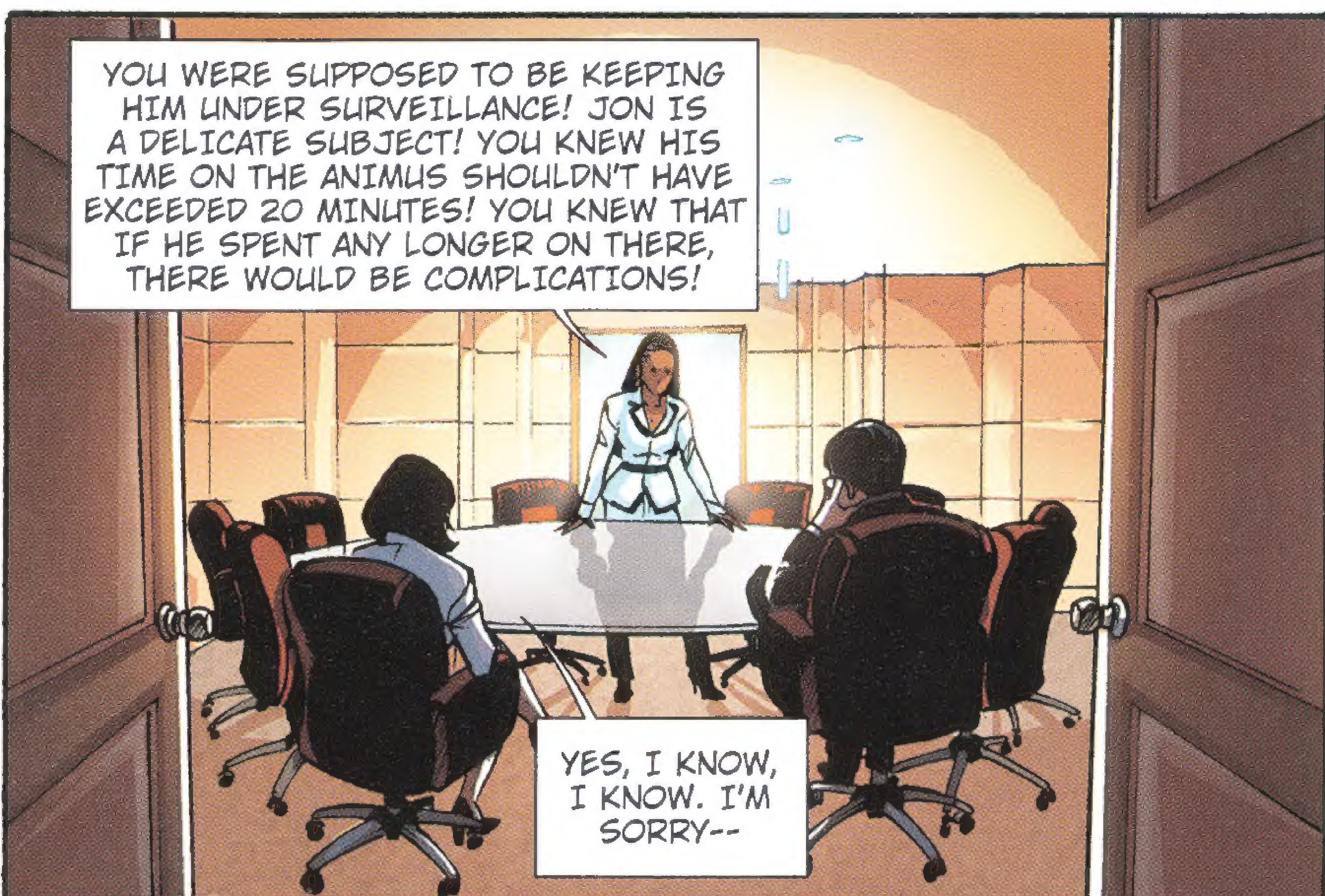


HE'S
UNCONSCIOUS!



"DAMMIT, NANCY!
WHAT HAPPENED?"

"I DON'T KNOW,
STELLA. I DON'T
UNDERSTAND--"

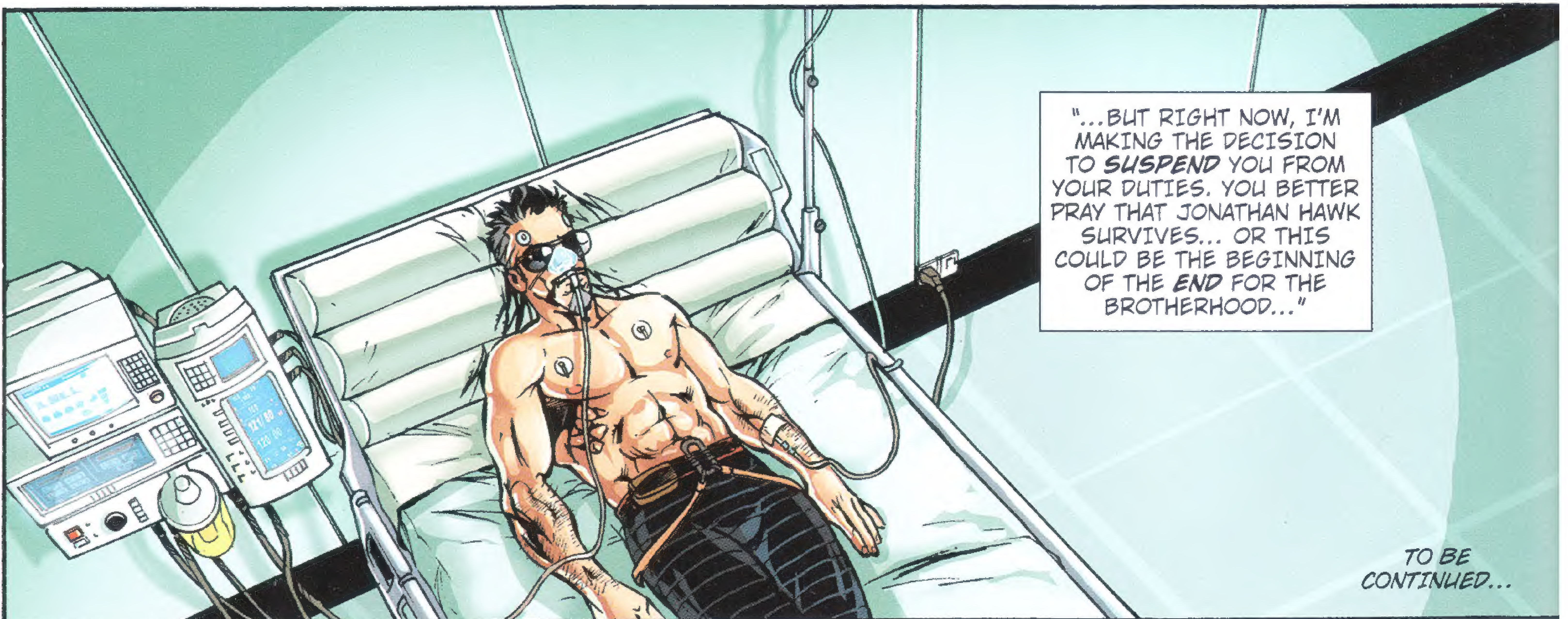
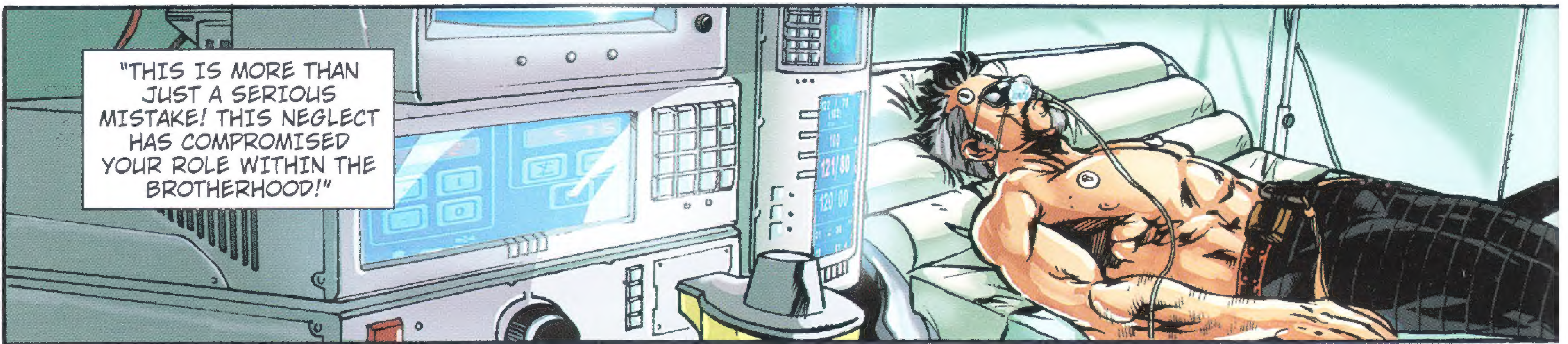
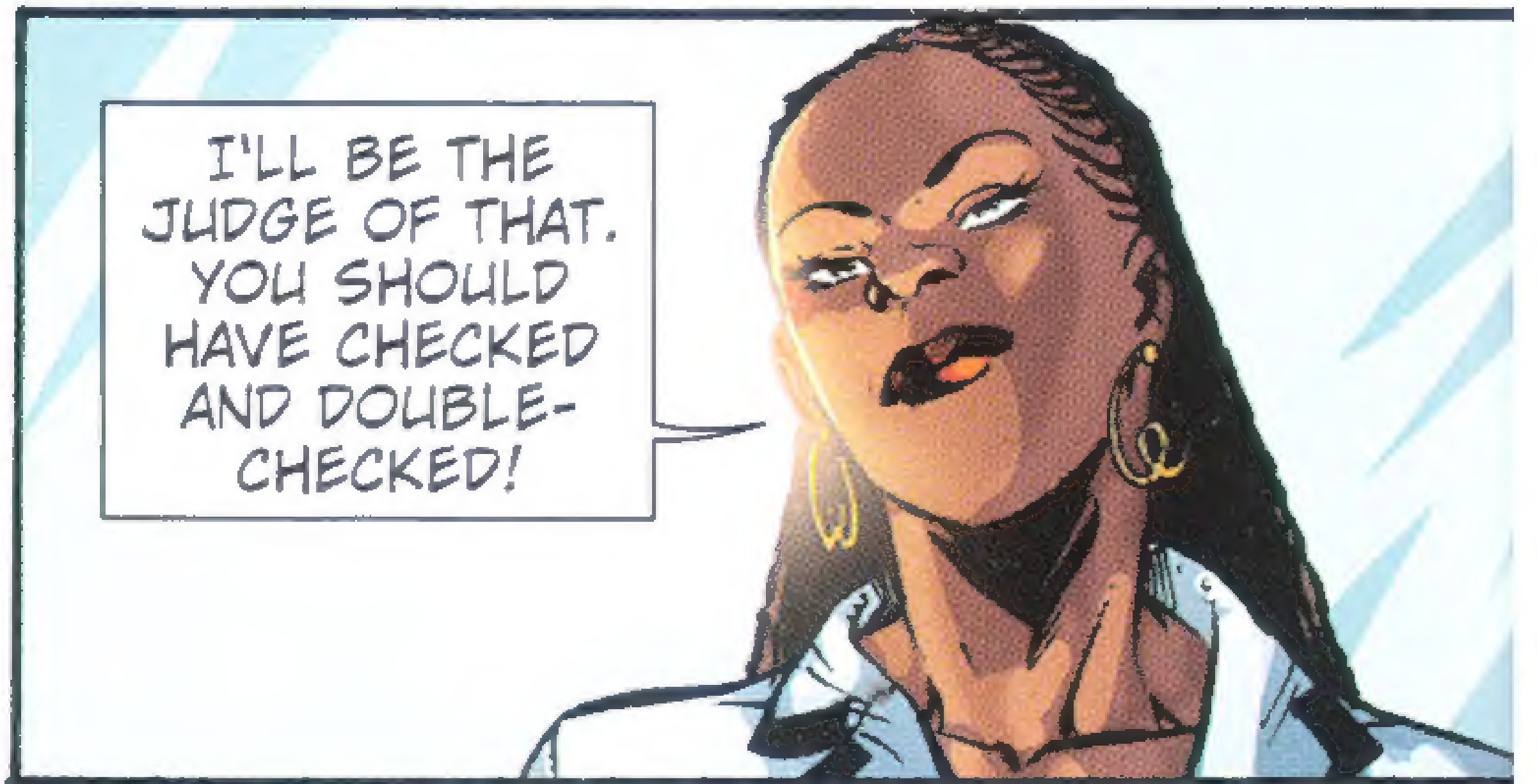
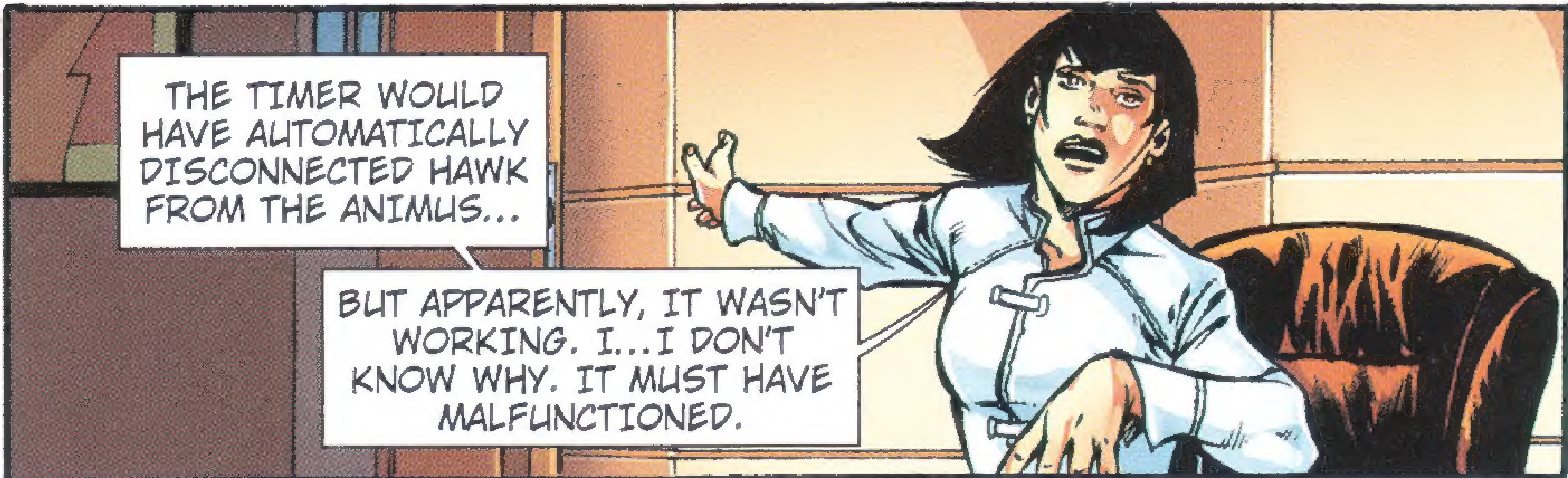
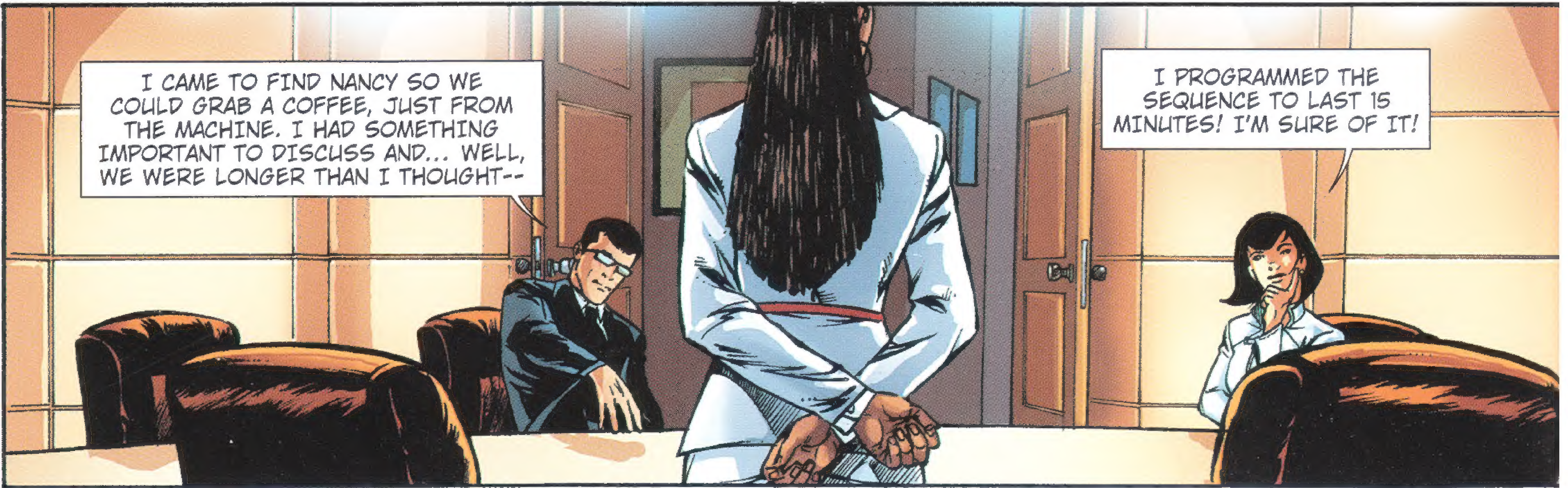


YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE KEEPING
HIM UNDER SURVEILLANCE! JON IS
A DELICATE SUBJECT! YOU KNEW HIS
TIME ON THE ANIMUS SHOULDN'T HAVE
EXCEEDED 20 MINUTES! YOU KNEW THAT
IF HE SPENT ANY LONGER ON THERE,
THERE WOULD BE COMPLICATIONS!

YES, I KNOW,
I KNOW. I'M
SORRY--



IT'S MY FAULT,
STELLA.



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